A NEW TRANSLATION OF SOLOMON's SONG.

THE SCRIPTURES CONTAIN NOT ONLY THE PUREST PRECEPTS OF MORALITY, BUT THE MOST 'BEAUTIFUL' AND SUBLIME STROKES OF GENUINE POETRY.

Eſſay on the Genius of Pope.

THE SONG of SOLOMON,

NEWLY TRANSLATED FROM THE ORIGINAL HEBREW:

WITH

A COMMENTARY AND ANNOTATIONS.

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PREFACE.

THE following is an attempt to reſcue one of the moſt beautiful paſtorals in the world, as well as the moſt ancient, from that obſcurity and confuſion in which it has been involved by the injudicious practice of former commentators. The generality of theſe have been ſo buſily employed in opening and unfolding its allegorical meaning, as wholly to neglect that literal ſenſe, which ought to be the baſis of their diſcoveries. If a ſacred allegory may be defined, A figurative diſcourſe, which, under a lower and more obvious meaning, delivers the moſt ſublime and important truths: then it is the firſt duty of an expoſitor to aſcertain that lower and more obvious meaning. For till this is done, it is impoſſible to diſcover what other truths are couched under it. Without this all is vague and idle conjecture. It is erecting an edifice without a foundation, which, however fair and goodly to the view, will be blown down by the ſlighteſt breath of true criticiſm. The firſt principles of figurative compoſition require, that the metaphorical ſenſe and the proper, the allegory and its literal

meaning, the apologue and its moral, the parable and its ſpiritual application, ſhould be clearly diſtinguiſhed from each other. To jumble and confound them is contrary to the rules of all good writing, and indeed of common ſenſe. Yet this is the great fault of almoſt all the expoſitors of SOLOMON'S SONG. *Even the beſt of them, biſhop Patrick, makes no regular diſtinction between the two ſenſes; but if in one verſe the literal meaning is explained, the next is devoted to allegorical conjecture.*

To prevent this confuſion, the ſole deſign of the preſent little work is to eſtabliſh and illuſtrate the literal ſenſe. If it meets with approbation, it is propoſed in a future attempt to enquire, what ſublime truths are concealed under it. For that this fine Eaſtern paſtoral was deſigned for a vehicle of religious truths, is an opinion handed down from the earlieſt antiquity. That it MAY BE *ſo, has been clearly proved by one of the beſt Critics of the age*: and that it* IS *ſo, may be ſtrongly preſumed not only from that ancient and univerſal opinion, but from its being preſerved in a book, all whoſe other contents are of a divine religious nature.*

* *Dr. Lowth, who has ſhewn that the ſame kind of images, which are uſed in this poem, have a ſublime ſpiritual ſenſe in other undoubted parts of holy writ.*

To Dr. Lowth's admirable PRÆLECTIONES *the reader is refered for farther ſatisfaction on that ſubject. The tranſlator, in this work, ventures to go no farther than the obvious literal meaning: he only dwells on the outſide, and does not preſume to penetrate behind the veil. He only conſiders this Song at preſent in the loweſt point of view, as a poetical compoſition, and therefore hopes he ſhall be pardoned for examining it with all the freedom of criticiſm. If any expreſſion ſhould occur, in which he may be thought to have treated an inſpired writer with too little reverence, he deſires it may be conſidered as* HUMANLY SPOKEN; *relative only to Solomon's poetic powers, no way reflecting on his prophetic character.*

Whether this Song be conſidered as a ſimple paſtoral, or a ſublime allegory, it is of no conſequence to inquire how far the incidents are founded on fact. The ſame poetic beauties may be diſplayed, the ſame allegorical truths may be delivered, whether the circumſtances of the narrative be real or feigned. From the many perſonal and local particularities, one would be tempted to conclude that theſe eclogues deſcribe a real marriage, and that Solomon once celebrated his nuptials in the paſtoral manner that is here deſcribed.

The editor will be glad if any thing here offered ſhould excite ſome greater maſter of oriental literature to take the ſubject out of his hand, to whom he will gladly reſign the pen. Till then the reader is deſired to accept the following attempt, the humble aim of which is only to find out the plain literal ſenſe, to interpret it in a tolerably conſiſtent manner, and to do ſome juſtice to the poetical beauties. If the reſearch has not always been ſucceſsful, the learned will make candid allowances. They well know the difficulties to be encountered in attempting to explain a poem, that is of ſuch remote antiquity; that is written in a language imperfectly preſerved in one ſingle book; that expreſſes the beauties of a climate ſo different in all its productions from our own; and alludes to the manners of a people, ſo ſingular in all their opinions and cuſtoms, and doubtleſs ſo in their taſte and ſtandards of excellence.

The plan is borrowed from that of the celebrated Biſhop of Meaux as deſcribed by Dr. Lowth: for the biſhop's book has been ſought after by the tranſlator in vain. In the execution he has ventured to depart from his original, principally in the diſtribution of the ſeveral parts, or DAYS, *which will here be found differently, and, it is hoped, more naturally divided, than they would be according to the Biſhop's*

*Biſhop's ſcheme. In tranſlating and illuſtrating the text the beſt and moſt ſkilful expoſitors have been conſulted. The conjectural emendations of P. Houbigant * are generally given in the Notes, though ſparingly admitted into the Verſion. When Dr. Kennicott ſhall have compleated his great and uſeful work of collating all the Hebrew MSS, we ſhall ſee how far the French Father's criticiſms are juſtly founded. To a very ingenious and learned friend are owing the Notes ſubſcribed* B. *and many happy illuſtrations in the Commentary, which could not be particularly pointed out. If the reader admires them, he will ſympathize with the editor, who, while theſe ſheets were printing off, loſt this amiable, this excellent friend, the favourer, the aſſiſtant and companion of his ſtudies, the inſtructor of his youth, and the correſpondent of his riper age. Who under the moſt invincible modeſty, poſſeſſed every intellectual accompliſhment, a lively imagination, moſt correct taſte, ſound and piercing judgment, a ſtrong and well-cultivated memory. Yet in whom the character of the accompliſhed ſcholar was greatly ſubordinate to that of the worthy and good man, the chriſtian, and the clergyman. The reader will pardon this ſmall tribute to departed me-*

* *See his* "Biblia Hebraica cum notis criticis et verſione Latina ad notas criticas facta." Lutetiæ, 1753. 3 Tom. folio.

rit:

rit: that it is ſtrictly due, will be acknowledged by all who had the happineſs of being acquainted with the late Rev. Mr. BINNEL *of* NEWPORT *in* SHROPSHIRE.

☞ *Such words in the Tranſlation as are added to fill up* ELLIPSES *in the Original are included within inverted commas,* 'thus'.

INTRO-

INTRODUCTION.

THE following poem is intitled THE SONG OF (or, CONCERNING) SOLOMON.

The SUBJECT of it appears * to be the LOVES of that celebrated Hebrew monarch (ſee page 2. 15. 16. 17.) and ſome very beautiful perſon, who is called SHULAMITH, or bride of Solomon (p. 34.) his ſpouſe, his ſiſter (p. 20.) his love, his fair one (p. 11.). It deſcribes ſeveral particulars of their nuptials, and celebrates NO LOOSE AMOURS; but that holy WEDDED LOVE, which allowably glows in the chaſteſt boſom.

The FORM of this poem is DRAMATIC; as appears from the changes of addreſs, which occur in every page. And though in the Hebrew copies, the ſeveral ſpeeches are diſtinguiſhed by no external marks, there can be no more doubt that

* I ſay APPEARS, becauſe at preſent the literal ſenſe only is conſidered: nothing that is urged in this or any of the following pages being intended to exclude ſuch ſpiritual application as is ſolid and well founded.

ſuch

ſuch a change of addreſs was intended by the Poet, than, if we were to meet with a ſcene of Terence's written without the names of the interlocutors, we ſhould be at a loſs to pronounce it Dramatic, or to trace out the different changes of the dialogue. Theſe are the more eaſily aſcertained in the preſent caſe, as the Hebrew Language is exceedingly accurate in diſtinguiſhing perſons, having maſculine and feminine terminations of their verbs and pronouns. So that THEE or THOU are different when addreſſed to a man, and a woman: and in THOU LOVEST it is known, by the final ſyllable, whether the perſon ſpoken to, is male or female.

But that the poem is in the form of a DIALOGUE, is ſo evident that it requires no ſkill in Hebrew to diſcover it. Let the reader only turn to the common tranſlation and he will find that ſometimes the Spouſe addreſſes the Bridegroom (Ch. vii. ver. 11.); ſometimes is addreſſed by him (Ch. i. ver. 9.); ſometimes ſhe ſpeaks of him as abſent (Ch. v. ver. 8.); goes in ſearch of him (Ch. iii. ver. 2. Ch. vi. 1, 2.); finds him (Ch. iii. ver. 4.); accoſts him, and is accoſted by him (Ch. vi. 4. &c.): Sometimes ſhe addreſſes the Virgins her companions (Ch. v. ver. 8.); who anſwer her again (Ch. v. 9.): and ſometimes he addreſſes himſelf to his Friends (Ch. v. 1.)

It

It is evident then that the poem is conducted in the form of a Dialogue, and that there are ſeveral SPEAKERS: let us next inquire who theſe Speakers are. Theſe appear to be, 1. Solomon. 2. his Spouſe, 3. the Virgins, her companions, and, I think, 4. the Friends of the bridegroom.

That the poem does not conſiſt of one ſingle undivided Dialogue, but is broken into SEVERAL PARTS, will appear evidently to any one who ſhall conſult, in any verſion, Chap. ii. 7. 8. Ch. iii. 5. 6. Ch. vi. 10, 11. Ch. viii. 4, 5. &c.

Of what nature thoſe ſeveral PARTS are is next to be inquired. Some have endeavoured to find in this poem, the exact model of the Grecian Drama: they have divided the whole into five regular acts, and fancied they diſcovered all the unities of Time, and Place, and Action. Others again have imagined it to conſiſt of ſeveral diſtinct unconnected Eclogues, which bear no more relation to each other, than ſo many paſtorals of Virgil or Theocritus.

But whoever examines this poem with attention will be convinced that it is not a regular Drama according to the Grecian rules, on the one hand; nor a parcel of diſtinct unconnected Paſtorals on the other. He will find that it is broken into more parts than five; and that thoſe parts have a mutual

a mutual relation and dependance: for the dialogue is carried on by the ſame ſpeakers, and the ſame ſubject is continued through them all. Yet on the other hand there is no appearance of Dramatic unity, according to the ſevere ſtandard of the Grecian Critics; there is no one great event to which every thing tends; there are no ſtriking reverſes of fortune, or important cataſtrophe: no fable or plot in the unravelling of which the poem is wound up. There are ſome paſſages which denote a change of place, and others an alteration of time. One while we are in the royal apartments, p. 2. Another while in ſearch of the ſhepherds tents, p. 4. Sometimes in one part of the gardens, and ſometimes in another. So again in one place the morning is characterized, in another the evening: ſometimes the adventures of the day are recounted; and ſometimes we have a recital of thoſe of the night.

It was from conſidering all theſe particulars, and finding that the poem naturally broke into ſeven parts, that an eminent French Critic † very happily conjectured that it might poſſibly deſcribe the SEVEN DAYS of the NUPTIAL ſolemnity: and his diſcovery is the baſis of the preſent attempt.

† M. Boſſuet, Biſhop of Meaux.

It

It is well known that among the Hebrews from the earlieſt times the nuptial feaſt continued SEVEN days. This appears from the words of Laban to Jacob, when he had obtruded Leah upon him inſtead of Rachel. *Fulfill her week*, i. e. compleat the ſeven days of the nuptial ſolemnity with Leah; *and* (then) *we will give thee this* (Rachel) *alſo*; *for the ſervice which thou ſhalt ſerve with me yet ſeven other years*. Gen. xxix. 27. It appears alſo from the marriage of Sampſon, that the nuptial feaſt laſted ſeven days. Judg. xiv. 15, 17: And even from the marriage of Tobias with Sarah.—Raguel the bride's father inſiſted that the marriage-feaſt ſhould be ſolemnized at leaſt fourteen days, that is, double the uſual time, becauſe he had given his daughter and ſon-in-law up for loſt. See Tob. viii. 19. 20. This rule is to this day obſerved among the Jews, and is deemed ſo eſſential, that their Rabbies ſay, if a man were to marry ſeveral wives at once, he ought to obſerve a nuptial week of Feſtivity with every one of them*.

During theſe ſeven days of feaſting, the Bridegroom was attended by a ſelect number of COM-

* Calmet Pref. ſur les Cantiq. Seld. Uxor. Heb. L. ii. c. 11.

PANIONS,

PANIONS, who paſt the whole time with him, and are ſtyled in the New Teſtament *the friends of the bridegroom*, Joh. iii. 29; and *the children of the Bridechamber*; Mat. ix. 15. Sampſon had no fewer than thirty at his wedding, Judg. xiv. 11. but whether that was the ſtated number does not appear. On the other hand a ſelect number of VIRGINS accompanied the Bride; theſe are called in the book of Pſalms *the Virgins her companions*, Pſ. xlv. 14. and are in the Goſpel ſaid to be *Ten* in number: whoſe buſineſs it was to go forth and meet the bridegroom, Mat. xxv. 1. &c. In the company of theſe the week of marriage was ſpent, no doubt, in every kind of diverſion that was not forbidden by the Law*: And from the following poem it ſhould ſeem that every one of the ſeven days was anciently appropriated to ſome ceremony that entered into a confirmation of the marriage contract. At preſent the Jews compleat all the nuptial rites on the evening of the marriage, and devote the ſeven days following to feſtivity and mirth only.

The ſeveral writers who have treated of the marriage ceremonies of the Jews, vary in their

* Even the intervention of the ſabbath did not interrupt the nuptial Feſtivities. See Calmet and Selden, ubi ſupra.

accounts

accounts from each other, and expreſly tell us that different uſages have prevailed in different times and places †; for zealouſly as the Jews are attached to their ancient cuſtoms, they have admitted conſiderable changes in this reſpect as well as other nations. A ſtriking difference may be obſerved between the marriage rites occaſionally mentioned in the Goſpel, and thoſe obſerved by the Jews at preſent ‡: And doubtleſs in the time of Solomon and in the ages preceding the great captivity, they were ſtill more remote from the modern uſage. This ought to be conſidered by thoſe who are diſappointed in not finding in this poem all the marriage ceremonies deſcribed, as they are at preſent laid down in the Jewiſh ritual.

In an excellent little treatiſe intitled THE PRESENT STATE OF THE JEWS, BY L. ADDISON *, D D. we learn how marriages are ſolemnized among the Jews of Barbary. After the mar-

† Seld Uxor. Heb. L. ii c. 16. et paſſim.

‡ To inſtance only in one circumſtance; in the time of our Saviour, the Bride was attended with TEN Virgins, who went out with lamps to meet the Bridegroom: at preſent I find mention but of TWO and theſe ſit on each ſide the Bride, when the Bridegroom makes his entrance. This at leaſt is the uſage among the Jews of Barbary. See the next page.

* [Father of the celebrated Mr. Addiſon] 2d Edit. 1676, 12mo.

riage contract is made between the Bridegroom and the Relations of the Bride, ſhe is carefully bathed for ſeveral days; and this with a peculiar attention on the eve before the marriage: after which ſhe is ſecluded from the ſight of all men even her neareſt relations. On the wedding day ſhe is finely adorned, and paſſes the morning in acts of devotion. Towards the evening the Bridegroom comes attended with ſome ſelect Friends, by whom he is conducted into a chamber where the Bride ſits between two Virgins, as her attendants. She continues ſeated, while a Rabbi reads the bill of dower, and then the Bridegroom puts a ring upon one of her fingers, calling to all preſent to atteſt the ceremony. Which done, the Rabbi pronounces them married, and gives them the nuptial benediction. Then wine is preſented to the Bridegroom, and he breaks the glaſs in memory of the deſtruction of the temple. After this he takes off the Bride's veil, and giving her his right hand, ſits down by her. The marriage ſupper is then ſerved up, after which they are conducted into the bridal chamber: this in the ſummer is uſually a kind of bower or arbour. We learn from Selden *, that anciently among the Jews of Galilee, it was the cuſtom for two

* Seld. Uxor Heb. Lib. ii. c. 16.

bridemen

bridemen to be preſent in the bridal-chamber as witneſſes of the conſummation: a circumſtance which the reader is deſired to remember when he comes to conſider the ſixth day's eclogue of this poem.

On the next morning, begins the nuptial feaſt and continues SEVEN † days, during which the Bridegroom does not cohabit with the Bride except in the day time; and this helps to account for the Bridegroom's abſence from the Bride in many evenings of the following poem. During that ſeparation the young couple make little agreeable preſents to each other, and no doubt exhibit other tender proofs of their regard.

Among the modern Jews the nuptial week is kept in the houſe of the Bride's father, and when the ſeven days are expired ſhe is conducted with great pomp to the houſe of the Bridegroom. But in ancient times it was perhaps different; at leaſt in the marriage of a ſovereign prince, this circumſtance could not well have been obſerved;

† Dr. Addiſon ſays, EIGHT days among the Jews of Barbary; but if this is not a miſtake (which I ſuſpect from his referring to Judg. xiv. 12. where it is expreſſly SEVEN days,) it is another proof how much the Jews vary in their marriage rites: in all other places the Jews obſerve SEVEN days.

it is more likely that on ſuch occaſions the Bride her Mother and Virgin-companions were at once conducted to the royal palace, and the whole week of rejoicing was ſpent within the royal incloſure.

This at leaſt ſeems to have been the caſe with that marriage, which is the ſubject of the following poem. The intire ſcene of theſe divine Eclogues is apparently laid within the incloſure of the palace and royal Gardens. This will account for ſeveral paſſages which appear very wild on any other ſuppoſition. Such is the rambling of the new Bride (p. 13. 26.) in ſearch of her Lover, ſo contrary to the retired and reſerved manners of the eaſtern ladies. Such is the watchmen ſmiting her (p. 26): with many other incidents of a ſimilar kind. But upon this plan, the CITY mentioned in this poem will be nothing more than a range of pavillions or little houſes appropriated to the uſe of thoſe that were miniſters of the Serail &c. and the WATCHMEN will be eunuchs appointed to watch over the carriage of the fair females, as well as to wait upon them; and for whom it was not I ſuppoſe in ancient times unuſual, any more than it is at preſent, to give their lovely miſtreſſes a ſtripe or two, when

when they behaved indiſcreetly *. As for the *flock*, *foxes*, &c. found there: it is well known that the extent of what may be called the pleaſure ground of the Eaſtern princes was extremely large. The Paradiſe of Aſtyages, deſcribed by Xenophon in his Inſtitution of Cyrus, was furniſhed with variety of game and ſuch like, for the exerciſe and amuſement of that great monarch. As for the flocks of the Bridegroom and his Companions: it is ſufficient to obſerve that the whole poem has a paſtoral air given to it; and beſides this, it appears but like one of the freaks of ſolitary greatneſs, which, by Eaſtern policy being cut off from all free converſe with its ſubjects, ſeeks among its ſlaves in its impenetrable incloſures for the eaſe and pleaſing amuſements of private Life. If the reader will conſult a late account of the emperor of China's Gardens and rural amuſements in the 2d vol. of MISCELLANEOUS PIECES RELATING TO THE CHINESE, 2 vols. 1762. p. 175, he will need no farther elucidation of what we here mean to ſuggeſt to him.

* See ſome of the accounts of Perſia, &c.

These obſervations premiſed, we ſhall now give a ſhort Commentary of the whole poem, and endeavour to point out and illuſtrate the contents of each diviſion.

COM-

COMMENTARY.

THE FIRST DAY'S ECLOGUE.

THE BRIDE had in the preceding evening been brought home to Solomon's palace and lodged in his HADORIM, or inner appartments, where he kept his women: In the morning ſhe finds herſelf alone with the Bridemaids, the Bridegroom having withdrawn to his rural amuſements. And here the poem commences.

I. The Bride, full of his charming idea, breaks out into the moſt rapturous expreſſions of love and tenderneſs, and with the agreeable delirium of a love-ſtricken mind, addreſſes herſelf to the object of her affection, as if he were preſent, wiſhing for his careſſes (p. 1.), declaring her regard (p. 2.), and bearing teſtimony to the amiableneſs of his character, which, by a common Eaſtern Metaphor, ſhe compares to the diffuſive fragance of fine ointments or perfumes (*Ibid*).

She then expreſſes her ſatisfaction on being brought into his family (*ib.*), and receives the congratulations of the BRIDEMAIDS (p. 3), who compliment her on her affection (*ib.*) and beauty (*ib.*). This produces ſome modeſt abatements on her part, and a ſhort ſketch of the early part of her hiſtory (*ib.*). But immediately renewing her enquiries after her Lover by that fine apoſtrophe, *Tell me, O thou &c.* (p. 4.), ſhe receives ſome general directions from her VIRGIN COMPANIONS, in conſequence of which, ſhe ſets out in ſearch of him (*ib.*). And here ſeems to be a break in this day's eclogue.

II. The BRIDEGROOM ſeeing the Bride (perhaps at ſome little diſtance) thus anxiouſly ſeeking him, commends her conjugal affection by comparing her to ſome beautiful mare of his that was remarkably well-trained (p. 5.). Then complimenting her, as well on her native charms, as on the elegant adjuſtment of her ornaments, in which the VIRGINS promiſe her their future aſſiſtance (*ib.*); he receives ſuitable returns of tenderneſs and regard (p. 6.); and hence the Dialogue is carried on in a very poetical manner, with that digreſſive unconnected wildneſs of tranſition, which all paſtoral poetry delights

delights in; till at length the eclogue concludes with their mutual careſſes (p. 8, 9), and here the Muſe very properly withdraws.

THE SECOND DAY'S ECLOGUE

Belongs wholly to the SPOUSE, and is addreſſed by her in a continued narration, after the Grecian manner, to the Chorus of Virgins.

I. The BRIDE relates how the Bridegroom, accompanied with his Companions and equipped for rural ſports, had come and called on her under her window (p. 10.), inviting her to come forth and enjoy the beauties of the ſpring (p. 11). She repeats his fine paſtoral addreſs, and in concluſion breaks out into that charming Epiphonema (p. 12), *My beloved is mine*, &c. Having thus heated her imagination with repeating his tender words to her, in a tranſport of affection ſhe addreſſes herſelf to him, as if he was preſent. *Until the day breathe .... return my beloved &c.*

II. She then returns to her narration (p. 13); the Bridegroom did not come according to her wiſhes; night came on, ſhe found him not in her

her bed, ſhe went out to ſeek him, at laſt found him, and brought him into the pavillion that had been aſſigned to her mother during her reſidence within the Royal incloſure (p. 14): ſhe then enjoyns the Chorus of Virgins, to whom ſhe had been giving this account, not to diſturb the reſt of her beloved in her mother's chambers, where ſhe had left him (*Ibid.*).

THE THIRD DAY'S ECLOGUE

Opens with the introduction of the bridal bed or pavillion (p. 15), and concludes with the ceremony of taking off the Bride's veil (p. 17).

I. One or more of the VIRGINS (or perhaps the SPOUSE herſelf) ſeeing ſomewhat at a diſtance, ſupported on pillars and ſurrounded with a cloud of incenſe, according to the manner of the Eaſtern nations, who were wont to uſe ſtrong fumigations by way of perfumes, and probably to drive away the inſects whoſe bite is ſo troubleſome in hot countries, very naturally aſks (p. 15), "What "is this, which approaches from yonder quarter "of the Gardens, that lies towards the wilder-"neſs?" Others of the VIRGINS, who by this

time perceive it more diſtinctly, anſwer (with ſome abruptneſs, like perſons who had been in doubt, but now ſuddenly diſcover what it is), "See! "'tis Solomon's bed," &c. Upon this a THIRD, &c. takes occaſion to deſcribe the ſuperb manner of its ſtructure (p. 16). All this ſeems to paſs in the Bride's apartment, whence the BRIDE ſends them forth (p. 17) to meet the Bridegroom, who with his grand retinue was now approaching very near.

II. King Solomon enters the Bride's apartment, not as uſual in the ſimplicity of his paſtoral dreſs, but in all the gay ornaments of a Bridegroom; and here it ſhould ſeem, that in the preſence of all his friends he performs the ceremony of taking off the Bride's veil. Which done, raviſhed with her beauties, he falls into a rapturous deſcant on them, and runs over her ſeveral features in an extaſy of admiration, naturally expreſſed by bold and ſwelling figures (*to* p. 19). In

THE FOURTH DAY'S ECLOGUE

The BRIDEGROOM profeſſes himſelf the bride's protector (p. 20), declares that he has received her

her pure and inviolated (p. 21), and that he finds in her all the comforts of the marriage ſtate (p. 23).

The BRIDEGROOM in the firſt place gives the Bride to underſtand, that ſhe is now under the cover of his protection, and is only to apply to him for relief under all dangers and difficulties: this according to the Eaſtern manner he does in the way of parable or figure, by ſuppoſing her placed on the tops of mountains infeſted by wild beaſts, whence he invites her to his arms as to a place of ſafety, and gives her to underſtand that now he is her guardian, ſhe may look down in ſecurity amidſt any dangers of which ſhe was apprehenſive (p. 20). He then launches out into ſome fine expreſſions on the effect and execution of her charms: which leads him,

In the ſecond place, to make a public declaration (before his friends, p. 21). that he has received her pure and inviolate: This the law requir- ſhould be made known in the moſt public and notorious manner, ſee Deut. xxii. 15, &c; but in the preſent caſe the ſame meaning is conveyed with great delicacy, yet ſo as to be perfectly underſtood by all preſent, by his uſing Eaſtern metaphors

phors ſtrongly expreſſive of his purpoſe, and (it ſhould ſeem) appropriated to nuptial ideas. He declares that he finds her as a garden ſecured from intruders, whoſe flowers have therefore been ungathered: as an inacceſſible ſpring, whoſe waters had never been polluted: as an unſullied fountain under the ſanction of an unbroken ſeal. And having here compared her to a garden he purſues the figure (p. 22) and ſuppoſes all the fineſt and moſt precious vegetable productions to enrich and embelliſh it. She, catching up the metaphor, wiſhes that this garden, for which he has expreſſed ſo much fondneſs, might be ſo breathed on by the kindly gales, as to produce whatever might contribute to his delight (p. 22, 23).

THE BRIDEGROOM returns the compliment (p. 23), and profeſſes that his wiſh is completely accompliſhed, that every poſſible delight is in his poſſeſſion, and he is entirely happy. And (ſtill keeping up the metaphor) he invites his friends to ſympathize and rejoice with him in his felicity.

THE FIFTH DAY'S ECLOGUE

Contains a ſolemn declaration from the BRIDEGROOM that he prefers his ſpouſe before all other women, p. 31.

I. The Bride relates an adventure of the preceding night, or perhaps only a lively dream which had ſo powerful an effect on her imagination, that ſhe miſtook it for a reality, and ſtarting up does the giddy tricks of p. 25, 26. by which ſhe expoſes herſelf to the chaſtiſement of the watchmen or Eunuchs (p. 26) who patrolled the royal incloſure. — In this diſtreſsful ſituation the chorus of VIRGINS are ſuppoſed to find her, and by their inquiries (p. 27) give her occaſion to deſcribe with all the high colouring of Eaſtern imagery the perſonal charms of her beloved bridegroom (p. 27, 28).

II. She afterwards recollects, where he is probably to be found (p. 29), and going in ſearch of him, finds him in or coming from his garden (p. 30). The BRIDEGROOM accoſts her with freſh encomiums on her beauty, repeating ſome of the images he had uſed in the third Day's eclogue (p. 18):

(p. 18): He declares that ſhe ſtands alone in his affection (p. 31); and concludes with relating how much his other queens and concubines were ſtruck with her figure, when ſhe looked out from her apartment the firſt morning after her arrival.

THE SIXTH DAY'S ECLOGUE.

The ſolemn putting of the Bride and Bridegroom to bed (which makes ſo eſſential a part of the marriage rites of all nations) ſeems to be the ſubject of this day's Eclogue. This ceremony is deferred till now, when the Bride after five days cohabitation may be ſuppoſed to have ſomewhat got the better of her Virgin baſhfulneſs. The HHUPPA or bridal pavillion is prepared for their reception in the garden of nuts (p. 33); whither

I. The Spouſe may be ſuppoſed, going to meet the Bridegroom. After the words *pomegranates bloſſomed*, the Septuagint verſion adds, '*and' that I might there grant thee my love*; if this addition be admitted, ſhe plainly declares her purpoſe, though in the next period her heart fails her: if this is away,

away, ſhe is aſſigning ſome pretty excuſes for going to the place, where ſhe does not care to own that her inclination led her. In either caſe the next ſentence after is expreſſive of a heart palpitating betwixt love, baſhfulneſs, fear, and other tender conflicting paſſions. The words that follow in p. 34. ſeem to put this interpretation out of doubt; why is the lady called *Shulamite*, that is, wife or bride of Solomon, but to put her in mind of her condition? as if it was meant to ſay, "Away with this modeſty, theſe "virgin airs, you are now the bride of Solo-"mon, and muſt prepare to aſſume that charac-"ter." It is not very evident whether theſe words belong to the Bridemaids, or to the ſons of the Bride-chamber, though with P. Houbigant we are inclined to attribute them to the latter.

II. From what follows in p. 35, it ſhould ſeem that the BRIDEMAIDS proceed to undreſs the Bride, in ſome privacy, it may be ſuppoſed, within the pavillion; and, as they draw off different parts of her dreſs, break out into admiration at the ſeveral beauties they diſcover. — Without commenting on the ſeveral images, as they follow in order, which, though to our cold

European

European imaginations they may appear ſomewhat extravagant, had a different effect on that of an Eaſtern Reader. The Bridemaids after undreſſing the bride, come at laſt to the head, which they infold, we may preſume, in an elegant head-dreſs, and then the king, who had been impatiently detained in ſome outer apartment, is admitted.

III. Being thus brought together, the Bridegroom's ſpeech very properly follows, *How beautiful &c.* p. 37. To this ſucceeds the Bride's reply, *I am my beloved's &c.* p. 38. in which is clearly ſeen the coy reſerve of a baſhful maiden, her affected delays, and modeſt excuſes. *O come, my beloved, &c.* p. 39. where in other words, ſhe ſays, "Let us not indulge our pleaſures now; "it is not for want of affection; to-morrow "morning will be ſoon enough; *the Vineyards* "*&c.* will be more ſuitable; there will I give "thee proofs of my love." ſoon after (in p. 43) ſhe begins to yield, "*O that thou wert, as my* "*brother &c.* I could then ſhew you in public "marks of my affection, but now I am aſhamed of "doing it." *I would give thee to drink &c.* "I "ſhould then find no difficulty in preſenting to "you this bowl of ſpiced wine, as the nuptial "ceremony requires, which at preſent I hardly

"know how to do before ſo many witneſſes." This laſts to the words, *His left hand is unaer my head*, &c. and then all her reluctance is over.

THE SEVENTH DAY'S ECLOGUE

Seems to be appropriated to the putting the finiſhing hand to the Contract, and ſettling the affair of the dowry*.

This day's eclogue is opened (p. 42) by the BRIDEMAIDS, who ſee the ſpouſe now, with her virgin airs laid aſide, leaning in all the fondneſs of conjugal affection upon her huſband. The BRIDEGROOM coming up makes a ſolemn recapitulation of the contract they had entered into, and of the ratification it had received from the mother (*Ib. &c.* p. 43) The contract being thus recapitulated, the BRIDE calls upon her huſband (p. 43) *O ſet me, &c.* to an inviolable

* Mr. Boſſuet ſuppoſes this day to be the ſabbath becauſe there is no mention of the bridegroom's going out to his rural occupations as heretofore: on the contrary he makes his ſolemn appearance in public with his bride. But it was not uſual with the Jews to have any kind of contract or dealings on the Sabbath. Seld. Ux. Heb. L. ii. c. 11.

obſervance

obſervance of it, for her affection for him was unalterable: and in return the BRIDEGROOM declares *(many waters &c.)* That nothing was capable of abating his fondneſs and love for her.

In pag. 44. the affair of the dowry comes on where the BRIDE, having a young ſiſter not yet marriageable, ſtipulates for ſome reſerve to be made in her favour. And the BRIDEGROOM declaring *(If ſhe be a wall &c.)* his conſent to ſettle on her an handſome dowry at her future marriage; the SPOUSE pronounces firſt herſelf *(I myſelf &c.)* and then her Vineyard (p. 45) and all her fortune to be Solomon's.

The whole nuptial ceremony being now compleated and the bridal week expired, the poem concludes with a few paſtoral expreſſions of mutual tenderneſs and affection.

☞ If the Reader ſhould think any of the following images too warm or otherwiſe inconſiſtent with delicacy, he is deſired to conſult M. MICHAELIS's judicious Notes on Dr. Lowth's PRÆLECTIONES, p. 160; in which he will find the difference between the Eaſtern and European manner in this reſpect, accounted for upon ſuch principles, as vindicate the Royal Poet from every unfavourable imputation.

THE

THE SONG OF SONGS, WHICH IS SOLOMON'S.

THE FIRST DAY.

SPOUSE, VIRGINS, BRIDEGROOM, COMPANIONS.

I.

SPOUSE

(Speaking of the Bridegroom, who is abſent.)

*LET him kiſs me with the kiſſes of his mouth!—

* Chap. i. ver. 1.

For, 'O!' thy love is more delicious than wine.

Becauſe of the fragrance of thy fine perfumes (thy name is as liquid perfume poured forth) therefore do the virgins love thee.

O draw me after thee!

VIRGINS.

We will run *to the fragrance of thy perfumes.*

SPOUSE.

The king hath brought me into his apartments.

VIRGINS.

VIRGINS.

We will be glad and rejoice in thee: We will celebrate thy love more than wine. Thou art every way lovely.

SPOUSE.

I am brown, but comely, O ye daughters of Jeruſalem, as the tents of Kedar, as the curtains of Solomon.

'Yet' look not down upon me becauſe I am brown; for the ſun hath diſcoloured me. My mother's children were ſevere unto me; they made me keeper of the vineyards: Mine own vineyard have I not kept.

Tell me, O thou, whom my ſoul loveth, where thou feedeſt; where thou makeſt 'thy flock' to reſt at noon: for why ſhould I be as a wanderer among the flocks of thy companions?

VIRGINS.

If thou know not, O thou lovelieſt of women, go thy way forth, 'follow' the footſteps of the flock, and feed thy kids beſide the ſhepherds' tents.

II.

BRIDEGROOM

(*meeting them*).

* I have compared thee, O my love, to my 'well-trained' ſteed in Pharaoh's chariots.

Comely are thy cheeks with rows 'of jewels': thy neck with chains 'of gold.'

VIRGINS.

We will make thee borders of gold with ſtuds of ſilver.

* Chap. i. ver. 9.

SPOUSE.

While the king 'ſitteth' in the circle of 'his' friends *, my ſpikenard ſhall diffuſe it's fragrance.

'As' a bundle of myrrhe is my well-beloved unto me: He ſhall lie all night in my boſom.

My beloved is unto me, 'as' a cluſter of cypreſs-flowers in the vineyards of En-gaddi.

BRIDEGROOM.

Behold, thou art fair, my love; behold thou art fair. Thou 'haſt' doves eyes.

* Sc. at the nuptial Banquet.

SPOUSE.

SPOUSE.

Behold, thou art fair, my beloved. And 'ah!' how pleaſant, how green is our 'flowery' bed!

BRIDEGROOM.

The beams of our houſe are of cedar: our cielings of cypreſs.

SPOUSE.

I am a 'meer' roſe of the field; a lily of the valleys.

BRIDEGROOM.

As the lily among thorns, ſo is my love among the maidens.

SPOUSE.

As the citron-tree among the trees of the wood, ſo is my beloved among the youths.

I had a longing deſire, and I ſate down under his ſhade, and his fruit was ſweet to my taſte.

O bring me into the houſe of feſtivity; ſpread the banner of love over me!

Support me with flagons, chear me with 'fragrant' fruits; for I am ſick of love!

His left hand is under my head, and his right hand doth embrace me.

I charge you, O ye daughters of Jerusalem, by the roes, and by the hinds of the field, that ye stir not up, nor awake 'my' love until he please.

THE

THE SECOND DAY.

SPOUSE, VIRGINS.

I.

SPOUSE.

* THE voice of my beloved! Behold he came leaping upon the mountains, ſkipping upon the hills. My beloved reſembled a roe, or a young hart.

Behold he ſtood behind our wall: he looked 'in' through the windows: he ſhewed himſelf through the latice.

* Chap. ii. ver. 8.

My

My beloved ſpake and ſaid unto me, "Ariſe, my love, my fair one, "and come away.

"For, lo! the winter is paſt: the "rain is over, is gone: the flowers "appear on the earth:

"The time of the warbling 'of "birds' is come: and the voice of "the turtle is heard in our land.

"The fig-tree giveth ſweetneſs "to her green figs: and the vines "'with' the tender grape yield a "'fragrant' ſmell.

"Ariſe, my love, my fair one, and "come away.

"O my

" O my dove, through the clefts of
" the rocks; through the ſecret places
" of the ſtairs; let me ſee thy coun-
" tenance; let me hear thy voice: for
" ſweet is thy voice, and thy coun-
" tenance is lovely.

" And' ye 'my companions', take
" us the foxes, the little foxes, that
" ſpoil the vines, for our vines 'have'
" tender grapes."

My beloved is mine, and I am his: he feedeth among the lilies.

Until the day breathe, and the ſhades flee away, return my beloved, and be thou like a roe, or a young hart on the mountains of Bether.

II.

(She proceeds, addreſſing herſelf to the Virgins.)

* By night on my bed I ſought him, whom my ſoul loveth: I ſought him, but I found him not.

'I ſaid,' I will riſe now and go about the city. In the ſtreets, and in the broad-ways will I ſeek him, whom my ſoul loveth. I ſought him but I found him not.

The watchmen, that go about the city, found me; 'to whom I ſaid,' Saw ye him, whom my ſoul loveth?

* Chap. iii. ver. 1.

It

It was but a little that I had paſſed from them, when I found him, whom my ſoul loveth.

I held him, and would not let him go, until I had brought him into my mother's houſe, and into the apartment of her that conceived me.

I charge you, O ye daughters of Jeruſalem, by the roes, and by the hinds of the field: that ye ſtir not up, nor awake 'my' love, until he pleaſe.

THE

THE THIRD DAY.

VIRGINS, SPOUSE, BRIDEGROOM, COMPANIONS.

I.

VIRGINS.

*WHat is this, that cometh up from towards the wilderneſs, as it were columns of ſmoke, fuming with myrrhe and frankincenſe, with all the powders of the merchant?

OTHER VIRGINS.

Behold his bed, which is Solomon's! Threeſcore valiant men are about it, of the valiant of Iſrael.

* Chap. iii. ver. 6.

They

They are all begirt with ſwords, being expert in war: every man 'hath' his ſword upon his thigh, becauſe of fear in the night.

OTHER VIRGINS.

King Solomon hath made himſelf a bridal bed of the wood of Lebanon.

He hath made the pillars thereof of ſilver: the inſide thereof of gold: the covering of it of purple.

The middle thereof is wrought 'in needlework' by her, whom he loveth 'beſt' among the daughters of Jeruſalem.

SPOUSE.

SPOUSE.

Go forth, O daughters of Zion, and behold king Solomon, with the crown wherewith his mother crowned him in the day of his eſpouſals, and in the day of the gladneſs of his heart.

II.

BRIDEGROOM

(having removed her veil).

* Behold thou art fair, my love; behold thou art fair.

* Chap. iv. ver. 1.

Thine eyes are 'ſparkling, as the eyes' of doves, 'now' thy veil is removed.

Thy hair is 'fine' as 'that' of a flock of goats, which come up 'ſleek' from mount Gilead.

Thy teeth are as a flock 'of ſheep,' that are 'even' ſhorn; which come up from the waſhing; which are all of them twins, and none hath loſt it's fellow.

Thy lips are like a brede of ſcarlet; and thy ſpeech is charming.

As the flower of the pomegranate, ſo are thy cheeks, 'now' thy veil is removed.

Thy

Thy neck is like the tower of David, built upon an eminence: whereon hang a thouſand bucklers, all ſhields of mighty men.

Thy two paps, are like two young roes, that are twins, which feed among the lilies.

Until the day breathe, and the ſhades flee away, I will get me to 'this' mountain of myrrhe, and to 'this' hill of frankincence.

Thou art all fair, my love, there is no ſpot in thee.

THE FOURTH DAY.

BRIDEGROOM, SPOUSE, VIRGINS, COMPANIONS.

BRIDEGROOM.

* COME to me from Lebanon, 'my' ſpouſe; 'come' to me from Lebanon.

Look down 'ſecurely' from the top of Amama; from the top of Shenir and Hermon; from the lions dens, from the mountains of the leopards.

Thou haſt raviſhed my heart, my ſiſter, 'my' ſpouſe: Thou haſt ra-

* Chap. iv. ver. 8.

viſhed

viſhed my heart with one 'glance' of thine eyes: with one 'charming' turn of thy neck.

How beauteous is thy love, my ſiſter, 'my' ſpouſe! How far more delicious is thy love, than wine; and the ſmell of thy perfumes, beyond all ſpices!

Thy lips, O 'my' ſpouſe, drop 'as' the honeycomb: Honey and milk are under thy tongue; and the ſmell of thy garments is like the ſmell of Lebanon.

A garden ſhut up is my ſiſter, 'my' ſpouſe: a ſpring ſhut up, a fountain ſealed.

'Thy productions are a paradiſe of pomegranates, with delicious fruits; cypreſs and ſpikenard:

Spikenard and ſafron: calamus and cinnamon: with all trees of frankincence, myrrhe and aloes, together with all the moſt precious ſpices.

O thou fountain of gardens! thou well of living waters, and flowing from Lebanon!

SPOUSE.

Awake, O northwind, and come thou, ſouth; blow upon my garden, that the ſpices thereof may flow out.

'Then'

'Then' let my beloved come into his garden, and eat his delicious fruits.

BRIDEGROOM.

I am come into my garden; my ſiſter, 'my' ſpouſe. I gather my myrrhe, with my ſpice: I eat my honeycomb with my honey: I drink my wine with my milk.

And you, O friends, eat, drink 'with me': yea drink abundantly 'of our' loves.

THE FIFTH DAY.

SPOUSE, VIRGINS, BRIDEGROOM, COMPANIONS.

I.

SPOUSE

(Recounting an adventure, or perhaps a dream, to the Bride-maids.)

* I was ſleeping, but my heart was awake. Lo! the voice of my beloved knocking 'at my door!'

"Open to me, my ſiſter, my love, "my dove, my undefiled: for my

* Chap. v. ver. 2.

'head'

" head is filled with dew: my locks
" with the drops of the night."

I have put off my veſt, how ſhall I put it on? I have waſhed my feet, how ſhall I defile them?

My beloved put his hand through the opening 'of the door,' and my bowels were moved for him.

I roſe up to open to my beloved, and my hands dropped 'with' myrrhe, and my fingers 'with' ſweet-ſmelling myrrhe upon the handles of the bolt.

I opened to my beloved; but my beloved had withdrawn himſelf 'and' was

was gone. My ſoul failed at 'the remembrance of' his words.

I ſought him, but I could not find him: I called him, but he gave me no anſwer.

The watchmen, that go about the city, found me: they ſmote me; they hurt me: the keepers of the walls plucked my veil off me.

I charge you, O ye daughters of Jeruſalem, if ye find my beloved— What ſhould you tell him, but that I am ſick of love?

VIRGINS.

VIRGINS,

What is thy beloved more than 'another' beloved, O thou faireſt among women? What is thy beloved more than 'another' beloved, that thou doeſt ſo charge us?

SPOUSE.

My beloved is white and ruddy, the chiefeſt among ten thouſand.

His head is 'as' the moſt fine gold. His locks are curled, 'and' black as a raven.

His eyes are as 'the eyes of' doves by the rivers of waters, waſhed with milk, ſitting at the full ſtreams.

His

His cheeks are as a bed of ſpices ſweetly budding forth. His lips are lilies dropping ſweet-ſmelling myrrhe.

His hands are 'as' gold finely turned, beſet with the chryſolite.

His belly is of pureſt ivory, inlaid with ſapphires.

His thighs are pillars of marble, fixed upon pedeſtals of fine gold.

His countenance is like Lebanon: majeſtic as the cedars.

His mouth is ſweetneſs itſelf: yea, he is altogether lovely.

This is my beloved, and this is my friend, O daughters of Jeruſalem.

II.

VIRGINS.

* Whither is thy beloved gone, O thou faireſt among women? Whither is thy beloved turned aſide, that we may ſeek him with thee?

SPOUSE.

(who now recollects where he is probably withdrawn).

My beloved is 'doubtleſs' gone down into his garden, to the beds

* Chap. vi. ver. 1.

of

of ſpices; to feed in the gardens, and to gather lilies.

I am my beloved's, and my beloved is mine: he feedeth among the lilies.

BRIDEGROOM

(who meets them going to the garden).

Thou art beautiful, O my love, as Tirzah; graceful as Jeruſalem; dazzling as bannered hoſts.

Turn away thine eyes from me, for they have overcome me.

Thy hair is ‘ fine’ as ‘ that’ of a flock of goats, which come up ‘ ſleek’ from Gilead.

Thy teeth are as a flock of ſheep, which go up from the waſhing; which are all of them twins, and none hath loſt it’s fellow.

As the flower of the pomegranate, ſo are thy cheeks, ‘ now’ thy veil is removed.

‘There are *’ threeſcore queens, and fourſcore concubines, and virgins without number. ‘ But’

My dove, my undefiled is one†: She is ‘ dear to me, as’ an only ‘ child’ to

* Sc. to me (i. e. I have :) Or, in my palace.

† i. e. Stands alone in my affections.

her

her mother: as her darling to her that bare her.

The maidens ſaw her, and bleſſed her; the queens and the concubines, and 'thus' they praiſed her,

"Who is ſhe that looketh forth
"as the morning, fair as the moon,
"bright as the ſun, 'and' dazzling as
"'all' the 'ſtarry' hoſts?"

THE

THE SIXTH DAY.

SPOUSE, BRIDEGROOM'S COMPANIONS, VIRGINS, BRIDEGROOM.

I.

SPOUSE.

* I went down into the garden of nuts, to ſee the fruits of the valley: to ſee whether the vine flouriſhed: whether the pomegranates bloſſomed.

I knew not 'the irreſolution of' my mind: 'which' made me 'with-

* Chap. vi. ver. 11.

draw ſwift as' the chariots of Aminadib.

BRIDEGROOM'S COMPANIONS.

Return, return, O bride of Solomon; return, return, that we may look upon thee.

VIRGINS.

What do you expect from the bride of Solomon?

COMPANIONS.

As it were the conflict of two armies.

II. VIRGINS.

II.

VIRGINS

(Having withdrawn with the bride into a pavilion, begin to undreſs her.)

* O! how beautiful are thy feet in ſhoes, O prince's daughter.

The moldings of thy thighs reſemble jewels, the handy-works of a ſkilful workman.

Thy navel is 'like' a well-turned goblet, 'which' wanteth not mingled wine.

* Chap. vii. ver. 1.

Thy belly is 'like' a heap of wheat, ſet about with lilies.

Thy two paps are like two young roes 'that are' twins.

Thy neck is as a tower of ivory.

Thine eyes are 'clear and ſerene as' the pools in Heſhbon, by the gate of Bath-rabbim.

Thy noſe is 'finely formed' as the tower of Lebanon, that looketh towards Damaſcus.

Thy head upon thee 'riſeth eminent and majeſtic' like Carmel: and

the treſſes of thy head ‘ ſhine ’ like ſcarlet.

‘ Lo ’ the king is detained in the antechamber!

III.

Bridegroom.

(Entering the pavilion)

* How beautiful art thou, and how ſweet? O ‘ my ’ love, how delicious?

This thy ſtature is like to a palm-tree: and thy breaſts to cluſters ‘ of dates!’

* Chap. vii. ver. 6.

I ſaid I will go up to the palm tree: I will claſp its boughs.

Yea thy breaſts ſhall be now, as the cluſters of the vine: and the ſmell of thy mouth, as of fragrant fruits:

And thy ſpeech, as the choiceſt wine, ſweetly entering my palate; flowing down ſmoothly through my lips and teeth.

SPOUSE.

I am my beloved's, and his deſire is 'fixed' upon me.

O come, my beloved, let us go forth into the field: let us lodge in the villages.

Let us get up early in the morning to the vineyards; let us ſee if the vine flouriſh; if the tender grape appear: if the pomegranates bloſſom.

I will there grant thee my love.

The fineſt flowers give their fragrance: and in our hoards are all 'manner of' delicious 'fruits', new-gathered as well as old: 'which' I have laid up for thee, O my beloved.

O that thou wert, as my 'infant' brother, ſucking my mother's breaſts. 'Then if' I ſhould find thee in the ſtreets I would kiſs thee, nor ſhould they reproach me 'as too fond.'

I would lead thee; I would bring thee into my mother's houſe: I would be conſtantly with thee.

I would give thee to drink of the ſpiced wine; of the juice of my pomegranate.

His left hand is under my head: and his right hand doth embrace me.

I charge

I charge you, O ye daughters of Jeruſalem, that ye ſtir not up, nor awake ‘ my’ love until he pleaſe.

THE

THE SEVENTH DAY.

VIRGINS, BRIDEGROOM, SPOUSE, BRIDEGROOM'S COMPANIONS.

VIRGINS.

* WHO is this that cometh up from towards the wilderneſs, leaning upon her beloved?

BRIDEGROOM.

I excited thee 'to love' under the fruit tree: there thy mother plighted

* Chap. viii. ver. 5.

thee

thee ‘ to me’ : there plighted thee ‘ to me’ ſhe that bare thee,

SPOUSE.

O ſet me as a ſeal upon thy heart : as a ſeal upon thy arm. For love is ſtrong, as death : Jealouſy is cruel as the grave. The ſparks thereof are ſparks of fire : of a moſt vehement flame.

BRIDEGROOM.

Many waters cannot quench love, neither can the floods drown it. If a man would give all the wealth of his houſe for love, it would be utterly contemned.

SPOUSE.

SPOUSE.

We have a little ſiſter, whoſe breaſts are not yet grown: What ſhall we do for our ſiſter in the day, when ſhe ſhall be demanded 'in marriage?'

BRIDEGROOM.

If ſhe be a wall, we will build upon her two ſilver towers: and if ſhe be a door, we will incloſe her in wainſcot of cedar.

SPOUSE.

I 'myſelf am' a wall, and my breaſts 'ſwell' like two turrets: there-

fore

fore it was that I found favour in his eyes.

Solomon hath a vineyard in Baal-Hamon: He hath let out the vineyard to keepers: Who, for the fruit thereof, are to bring each of them a thouſand pieces of ſilver.

My vineyard, which before brought me in a thouſand pieces, is 'now' thine, O Solomon: and there are two hundred pieces to thoſe that look after the fruit thereof.

BRIDEGROOM.

O thou that haſt taken up thy reſidence in my gardens: my companions

nions are attentive to thy voice: cauſe me ‘ ſtill’ to hear it.

SPOUSE.

Fly ‘ to me’, my beloved, and be thou like a roe, or a young hart upon the mountains of ſpices.

THE END.

ANNOTATIONS.

ANNOTATIONS

ANNOTATIONS

REFERRING TO THE PRECEDING PAGES.

PAG. 1. THE SONG OF SONGS, WHICH IS SOLOMON'S.] The latter part of the title ought perhaps to have been rendered, WHICH IS CONCERNING SOLOMON: לשלמה has evidently this ſenſe in the title to Pſal. lxxii. See P. Houbigant.

Ibid. *Let him kiſs me with the kiſſes of his mouth!—For 'O' thy love*, &c.] P. Houbigant here inſtead of ישקני *oſculetur me*, would read נשקני *oſculare me*, from a preconceived opinion that theſe words are a direct addreſs to the BRIDEGROOM. But a little attention will convince us that the BRIDEGROOM does not make his appearance 'till pag. 5.---For if Solomon in the Canticles does not always write with critical exactneſs, he does not ſeem to want the power of expreſſing the feelings of nature; and tho' he hath a ſpiritual ſenſe, yet the allegory is all along well ſuſtained, and the characters, according to the literal ſenſe, chaſtly preſerved. Now let us conſider what a figure the BRIDEGROOM makes upon the ſuppoſition that he is preſent at the Lady's addreſs. She overflows with love and tenderneſs, breaks out into the moſt melting expreſſions, but receives not one kind word

in reply from her Lover, nothing but a few dry compliments from her Virgin-companions. Is this nature? whereas, when he really appears, according to the other ſuppoſition in pag. 5, he performs his part excellently well, and is as fond and tender as his Miſtreſs. Now that the BRIDE's words in pag. 4. *Tell me, O thou,* &c. are not addreſs'd to the BRIDEGROOM as preſent, is evident from the reply, *If thou knoweſt not,* &c. for how impertinent is this anſwer, if it comes from the mouth of the BRIDEGROOM? The Lady deſires ſhe may not be a wanderer, and the Lover directs her to wander, tho' he could have ſaved her the trouble, and either have led her himſelf, or directed her very ſafely to the place where he was to be found. But as it comes from the Chorus of VIRGINS, it is very proper, becauſe, not knowing exactly the place, they put her into the moſt likely method of finding it.

Nor will the boldneſs of the apoſtrophe be deemed an objection by any that are acquainted with the laws of Poetry, or have been converſant with the pathetic. There is nothing more extravagant in the addreſs *For thy love is more delicious than wine,* than in

O formoſe puer, nimium ne crede colori,

and ſeveral other inſtances to be found in the ſecond eclogue of Virgil. And in the tenth eclogue,

Hic gelidi fontes, hic mollia prata, Lycori:
Hic nemus, hic ipſo tecum conſumerer ævo:

is at leaſt as bold as, *Tell me, O thou, whom my ſoul loveth, where thou feedeſt*, &c. Inſtances of the ſame kind may be produced from all the Poets, nor are they thereby departing from nature: the Paſſions in their paroxiſms are a kind of temporary madneſs; like it, they conſtantly dwell upon their ſeveral objects, and put men upon ſaying and doing a multitude of things, as if the objects themſelves were preſent to the ſenſes, where only the ideas of them are in very lively manner impreſſed on the imagination. B.

Ibid. *With the kiſſes of his mouth.*] The Hebrew idiom delights in redundancies of this kind. So in Pſal. xvii. 10. *With their mouth they ſpeak.* and Pſal. lxvi. 17. *I cried with my mouth.* So in p. 43 of this Song, the paſſage rendered *Would be utterly contemned*, is in the original *Contemning they would contemn.*

Pag. 2. *Becauſe of the fragrance of thy fine perfumes.*] Literally *of thy good ointments.* The Eaſtern nations, and, indeed the ancients in general, dealt much in unguents, which in the hot countries are neceſſary to brace and cloſe up the pores of the body. Fragrant ointments were eſpecially uſed on nuptial and other feſtival occaſions, ſee Pſal. xlv. 8. Prov. vii. 17. Amos vi. 6. 2 Sam. xii. 20. Hence the odour of ſweet ointments became a common metaphor to expreſs the extenſive acceptableneſs of a good name. Eccleſ. vii. 1.

P. Houbigant, with his uſual boldneſs, propoſes an amendment of the original words here, in order to con-

nect them with the preceding ſentence. He would read וריחך משמנים טובים, *et odor tuus unguentis bonis*. If this were admitted, the whole paſſage might be rendered *For thy love is more excellent than wine, and thy fragrance than fine ointments.*

Ibid. *We will run 'to the fragrance,* &c'.] The words printed in the text in italicks are ſupplied from the Septuagint and Vulgate verſions, and are countenanced by the Chaldee Paraphraſe: ſo that it is very probable the Hebrew copies once read נרוצה לריח שמניך; for it is hardly credible that the poet ſhould have put only one ſingle word (*we will run*) into the mouths of the VIRGINS on this occaſion. The word אחריך *after thee* is evidently connected with משכני *Draw me.* — Perhaps the ſpeech of the Chorus might more properly have been rendered, *We will follow* (*run after*) *the fragrance of the perfumes.* Vid. Noldii Partic. ל. ſignif. 24.

Ibid. *The king hath brought me into his apartments.*] חדרים are *the Inner Appartments* appropriated to the women, anſwerable to the Γυναικεῖα of the Greeks. The Eaſtern nations always had, and ſtill continue to have ſuch retirements, where the women live ſeparate and unſeen by all other men, but the great perſon to whoſe pleaſure and ſervice they are dedicated: and the ſenſe of the words plainly is, "The King hath admitted me for "his wife," or "hath taken me among thoſe, whom he "peculiarly honours with his preſence and favour." B.

Pag. 3. *Thou art every way lovely.*] The original words מישרים אהבוך contain a difficulty, which none of the commentators ſeem able to ſurmount. The common verſion *The upright love thee* is both very remote from the original, and ſeems to be quitting the literal ſenſe for the allegorical. The interpretation of Sanctius (in Pol. Synopſ.) which is here adopted, if it were but better ſupported, ſeems beſt to anſwer the context. He paraphraſes the words *Omnes amores inſunt tibi:* and indeed the BRIDE's ſpeech, which follows, ſeems moſt naturally to ſuppoſe ſome ſuch previous compliment. Without this, her vindication of her perſon comes in very abrupt and aukward: but, this admitted, her reply is very natural and appoſite; being to this effect: "You "compliment me on my beauty, which I can conſider "as nothing but irony and ſarcaſm; as intended to jeer "my want of it. But do not deſpiſe me on account of "the darkneſs of my complexion: for tho' I am brown "as the tents of the wild Arabs; I am finely formed "as the graceful foldings of the pavillions of Solomon. "And even this darkneſs of my ſkin was not a natural "blemiſh, but the effect of ſome ſevere uſage I receiv-"ed in my younger years."

After all, it muſt be confeſſed that the Hebrew words, as they ſtand at preſent, can hardly be brought to yield the ſenſe here given them: For even if we ſuppoſe the word אהבוך (*love thee*) to have crept into the text inſtead of ישבו בך (*abide in thee*): we ſhall hardly find another inſtance of מישרים uſed in the ſenſe of *Beauties*, or *Perſonal charms*.

P. Houbigant, who never ſcruples to cut the knott which he cannot eaſily untye, alters the verb to the 3d perſ. plural אהבנוך, and reads מישרים in the oblique caſe, as it is allowed to be uſed in pag. 38. rendering the whole to this effect:

We will celebrate thy loves: we love thee more, than generous wine, or wine, that goes down מישרים *ſmoothly.*

Ibid. *I am brown . . . . as the tents of Kedar.*] The word שחורה rendered *brown, ſwarthy,* or *dark-complexioned,* denotes ſuch a duſkineſs as is in שחר the morning, when ſome little light begins to appear. vid. PATRICK. [Wherever the word *fair* is applied to the BRIDE in the ſequel of this tranſlation it is only meant in the general ſenſe of lovely or beautiful.]

The tents of the wild Arabs (called in Scripture Kedarenes) are to this day of a very dark or black colour, being made of the ſhaggy hair of their black goats, as we learn from D'Arvieux's Travels, chap. 13.

Ibid. *My mother's children were ſevere unto me.*] P. Houbigant thinks by בני אמי *Filii matris meæ* are to be underſtood the Children of her Mother by another Father.

As *Anger* always implies a ſenſe of injury either real or pretended, nothing of which appears in the caſe before us, we rather chuſe to render the word נחרו, *were ſevere,* than in its more proper and ſtrict notion, *were angry.* B.

Pag. 3, Ibid.

Ibid. *Mine own vineyard have I not kept.*] The original has a peculiar emphaſis, *Mine own vineyard,* שלי *which is mine, have I not kept.* P. Houbigant tranſlates the word שלי, which he conſiders as equivalent to בשלי, by *tranquillè, (Mine own vineyard I kept not quietly:)* ſuppoſing that the cauſe of her being diſcoloured, was her not keeping under ſhelter, but running up and down expoſed to the burning heat of the ſun.

[But there will be no need of having recourſe to this ſolution, if, with Patrick and ſome others, we allow *Vineyard* to be the eaſtern phraſeology for an office committed to a perſon, or any intereſt he is concerned in. The Bride's meaning may be ſuppoſed to be, that ſhe was put to the moſt ſervile employments, in which ſhe could not preſerve her beauty; becauſe ſhe was like one, who, being ſet to watch another's vineyard, could not look after his own. B.]

Pag. 4. *Makeſt thy flock to reſt at noon.*] In the hot countries the ſhepherds and their flocks are always forced to retire to ſhelter during the burning heats of noon; this is beautifully expreſſed in a fine paſſage of Virgil's Culex, ℣ 116.

Et jam compellente vagæ paſtore capellæ
Ima ſuſurrantis repetebant ad vada lymphæ,
Quæ ſubter viridem reſidebant cærula muſcum.
Jam medias operum partes evectus erat ſol,
Cum denſas paſtor pecudes cogebat in umbras.

Pag. 5. *I have compared thee .... to my 'well-trained' ſteed*, &c.] The word לססתי literally ſignifies *To my mare*, nor ought we to think the compariſon coarſe or vulgar, if we conſider what beautiful and delicate creatures the eaſtern horſes are, and how highly they are valued. See *Buſbequii Epiſt.* Theocritus (as is obſerved by Grotius, and others) has made uſe of the very ſame image to expreſs the beauty of Helen, Idyl. xviii. ỳ 29.

—— Ἀτ' ἀνέδραμεν ὄγμος ἀρούρᾳ
Ἢ καίπῳ κυπάρισσος, Η ΑΡΜΑΤΙ ΘΕΣΣΑΛΟΣ ΙΠΠΟΣ·
Ὣδε κ) ἀ ἐυδόχρως Ἑλένα Λακεδαίμονι κόσμος.

[Though here indeed in the Canticles the Bridegroom does not ſeem to have in view to compliment the Bride on her beauty, ſo much as to celebrate her conjugal fidelity. She is anxiouſly concerned for his abſence, and fondly goes in ſearch of him: upon ſeeing her thus employed, he is charmed with her affection for him, and compares her to ſome Mare of his that was remarkable for being well trained and drawing gently: and (as the words may be paraphraſed) commends her for "drawing well in the marriage yoke." B.]

Pag. 6. *While the king 'ſitteth'*, &c.] This is the verſion of Piſcator and Mercerus, In circuitu suo, i. e. *in corona diſcumbentium, qui in orbem diſpoſiti eſſe ſolebant.* Vid. Pol. Synopſ.—P. Houbigant inſtead of במסבו *in circuitu*, propoſes במסכו *in aulæo, tentorio.* A needleſs emendation.

Pag. 6. Ibid.

Ibid. *He ſhall lie all night in my boſom.*] בין שדי literally ſignifies *between my breaſts.* The Orientals were wont to tye up myrrhe in little bundles, and to put them into the boſom to exhilarate the ſpirits. PAT. Some interpret the words צרור המור, a *wreath*, or *noſegay of flowery myrrhe*. So Caſtalio.

Ibid. *A cluſter of cypreſs flowers in the vineyards of En-gaddi.*] By כפר or *Cypreſs* here is not meant the tree ſo called, but an aromatic plant, which Sir Thomas Brown tells us produces "a ſweet and odorate buſh of flowers, "out of which was made the famous *Oleum Cyprinum.*" See his *Obſervations on Plants mentioned in Scripture.*

The *vineyards* at *En-gaddi*, near Jericho, were not ſo much for vines, as aromatic ſhrubs: theſe the Jews cultivated for the ſake of their gums, balſams, &c. with which they carried on a conſiderable traffic. Such ſhrubs were managed after the manner of vines, and hence the nurſeries of them were called כרמים *Vineyards*. Vid. Bochart. *Hierozoic* tom. ii. p. 724. edit. 1675.

Ibid. *Thou haſt dove's eyes.*] To conceive the force of this expreſſion, we muſt not refer it to our common pidgeons, but to the large and beautiful eyes of the Doves of Syria. They, who have ſeen that fine Eaſtern bird the *Carrier-Pigeon*, will need no commentary on this place. See Brown's *Obſervations*, &c.

Pag. 7. *How pleaſant, how green is our 'flowery' bed.*] אף נעים אף ערשנו רעננה. The peculiar force and beauty, which the repetition of the particle אף has here,

Pag. 7. ſeems

ſeems not ſufficiently attended to by any of the critics. We cannot help ſuppoſing, that it was intended to connect both the epithets with the ſubſtantive עֵרֶשׁ, and that עֲרִיסֵנוּ was originally fem. עֲרִיסָה. We have only given a looſe paraphraſe in the text, the better to ſhew the beautiful effect of the repetition, and becauſe the literal verſion does not come up to the elegance of the original. But literally the whole paſſage, according to the propoſed amendment, would be

Behold, thou art fair, my beloved. Yea pleaſant, yea green (or *flowery*) *is our bed.*

This, however, is propoſed with all the diffidence becoming a ſlight conjecture, and the reader may, if he pleaſes, prefer the following verſion, which is the ſenſe of the words unaltered.

Behold, thou art fair, my beloved, yea pleaſant. Yea our bed (or *couch*) *is ſtrewed with flowers.*

For רַעֲנָנָה is properly [*floridus*] *flowery*, and is ſo rendered by the beſt critics.

Ibid. *Our cielings of Cypreſs.*] בְּרוֹתִים are a peculiar kind of trees, which might be called after the original *Brutine* trees: they reſemble the Cypreſs in form, and the Cedar in ſmell. See *Ainſworth.*

Ibid. *I am a roſe of the field,* &c.] We have here followed all the ancient verſions, in preference to thoſe of the moderns, who generally interpret *Sharon* as a proper name. Yet a little attention to the context will convince us that the BRIDE does not here mean to extoll

the charms of her perſon, but rather the contrary. The BRIDEGROOM had juſt before called her *fair:* ſhe, with a becoming modeſty, repreſents her beauty as nothing extraordinary; as a meer common wild flower: This he with all the warmth of a lover denies, inſiſting upon it, that ſhe as much ſurpaſſes the generality of maidens, as the flower of the Lily does that of the Bramble: and ſhe returns the compliment.

The ingenious friend, who firſt ſuggeſted this interpretation, was of opinion, that the words have a ſtill farther force, and imply a tacit compariſon.

" The *Roſe of Sharon* (ſaid he) expreſſes eminence, whereas ſhe calls herſelf *a Roſe of the field* in oppoſition to the Roſe of the garden, which has more beauty, and is diſtinguiſhed for its own richneſs and variety of colouring; whereas *the Roſe of the field*, and *the Lily of the valleys*, owe their diſtinction to the leſs ornamented flowers that grow around them: ſo that what the BRIDE means to ſay is, " that whatever advantages of Beauty " ſhe appears to poſſeſs, are owing to the meaner beau- " ties about her." Thus the BRIDEGROOM's reply *(As the lily among thorns,* &c.*)* becomes more ſpirited. It may be thus paraphraſed. " Be it ſo that my love is a lily in " the vallies, yet ſhe is as much ſuperior to the maidens " about her, as the Lily is to the poor dull flowers of the " briar, and the bramble." B.

Pag. 8. *As the citron tree.*] תפוח is here rendered the *Citron-tree* upon the authority of the Chaldee paraphraſe: which obſerves, with what ſuperior beauty that rich fruitful plant muſt appear among the barren trees of

 the

the wood.— בתפוחים below ought perhaps to have been rendered *citrons*, rather than *fruits* in general.

Ibid. *O bring me*, &c.] We rather chooſe to render the verb הביאני in the imperative mood *, along with the Septuagint, than in the præter tenſe according to the points. By this means the paſſage is rendered much more dramatic and ſpirited, and correſponds more exactly with the verſe which follows.

P. Houbigant prefers the common verſion of the former part of the verſe, for the ſake of an emendation which he propoſes in the latter part, *He hath brought me into the houſe of wine,* וידגל *and hath magnified* (or *enlarged*) *his love towards me.*

Pag. 9. *I charge you ... by the roes*, &c.] A rural form of adjuring. The BRIDE intreats her Virgin companions by thoſe delicate and ſprightly creatures, which, ſkipping up and down, add ſo much beauty to ſylvan ſcenes, and in the purſuit of which, as nymphs fond of rural ſports, they may be ſuppoſed to have taken frequent pleaſure. It is natural to conjure a perſon by whatever is moſt affecting, dear or valued. So Dido in the Eneid. lib. 4 ℣ 314.

Per ego has lacrymas, dextramque tuam te - - -
Per connubia noſtra, per inceptos hymenæos - - -
Si bene quid de te merui, fuit ante tibi quicquam
Dulce

* *Septuaginta legerunt* הביאני *in Imp. Hiph. et* רגלוי *in Imperat. Kal. Vid. Capell. Crit. Sacra.*

Pag. 9.

Dulce meum; miſerere domus labentis, & iſtam
Oro, ſi quis adhuc precibus locus, exue mentem.
Vid. Bochart. Hieroz. tom. 1. p. 899.

Pag. 10. THE SECOND DAY.] So we have intitled this day's Eclogue, though only the firſt Part ſeems to relate to the incidents that happened on the SECOND DAY: the II. Part recites the adventures of the following night: and we may ſuppoſe the whole to have been related to the VIRGINS early on the morning of Day the third. THE THIRD DAY'S Eclogue recounts the incidents that happened afterwards on the ſame day; perhaps towards noon.

Ibid. *My beloved reſembled a roe*, &c.] By theſe images the BRIDE expreſſes the ardour of impatience, the ſpeed with which her lover haſtened to her. Swiftneſs of foot and agility of body, were admired accompliſhments among the ancient Hebrews. See Pſal. xviii. 33, &c.

Ibid. *Behold he ſtood*, &c.] The eaſtern buildings generally ſurround a ſquare inner court: the Bridegroom is deſcribed as entering the outward apartments, and gradually ſeen as he made his approach, firſt behind the wall, then looking through the windows, and laſtly putting his head through the latice *.

Pag.

* מציץ *proprie eſt florens, ſed metaphoricè hic ſignificat hominem caput è feneſtra emittentem, ut flos è calyce erumpit.* Clerici Comment. in locum.——

Pag. 10.

Pag. 11. *The fig-tree giveth ſweetneſs*, &c.] The fig-trees in Judæa bear double crops: the firſt of which is ripe in Spring. פגיה ſignifies the *unripe fig (crudum, immaturum)*: חנט is properly *condivit aromatibus*, by a metaphor it is applied to fruits, and ſignifies *maturat, ſeu dulcorat, dulces reddit*, See Pearce on the Miracles, Calaſio, Lud. Capell. &c.

Ibid. *The vines with tender grape.*] In many verſions, both ancient and modern, this paſſage is rendered *the vines in bloſſom:* ſo the Greek, Vulgate, Arabic, and Syriac: ſo the Jews Spaniſh verſion, fol. viz. *las vides dencierne dieron olor.* But we have followed the tranſlation of Le Clerc, whoſe note is, "*Aut* סמדר *ſunt minutæ uvæ, quæ tum in medio flore cernuntur, aut ea voce, cujus origo eſt ignota, ſignificantur præcoces vites quæ primum omnium florent.*" Vide Calaſ. Concord. &c.

Ibid. *The vines ---- yield a fragrant ſmell.*] In vindication of the image take the homely, but nervous, words of Sir Thomas Brown: "that the flowers of the "vine ſhould be emphatically noted to give a pleaſant "ſmell ſeems hard to our northern noſtrils, which diſco-"ver not ſuch odours, and ſmell them not in full vine-"yards: whereas in hot regions, and in more ſpread and "digeſted flowers, a ſweet ſmell may be allowed, denot-"able from ſeveral human expreſſions, and from the "practice of the ancients, in putting the dried flowers of "the vine into new wine, to give it a pure and floſculous "race or ſpirit, which wine was therefore called Οἰνάνθινον,

Pag. 11. "allowing

" allowing to every *cadus* two pounds of ſuch flowers." See his *Obſervations*, &c.

Pag. 12. *Thro' the clefts --- thro' the ſecret places*, &c.] Alluding to the BRIDE's being above in her chamber.

Ibid. *The foxes --- that ſpoil the vines, for our vines*, &c.] More literally *ſpoil the vineyards, for our vineyards*, &c. Foxes abound in Judea, and are obſerved by a multitude of authors to love grapes and to make great havoc in vineyards. Galen, in his book of *Aliments*, tells us that the hunters, in his country, did not ſcruple to eat the fleſh of foxes in autumn, when they were grown fat with feeding on grapes. See Patrick, Bocharti Hierozoic. tom. 1. p. 852, &c.

Ibid. *For our vines*, &c.] While the vines were juſt putting forth *the tender grape*, it would be eaſy for the foxes, &c. to do moſt miſchief, by gnawing the young buds.—Or perhaps the Bridegroom inſinuates to his Companions, that they cannot be too early in deſtroying a breed of vermin, that would prove ſo deſtructive to the future crop, of which there is now a promiſing appearance.

Ibid. *Until the day breathe.*] Or, *till the day blow freſh*, for this is the literal meaning of the original, עד שיפוח היום. A local beauty. In thoſe hot countries the dawn of the day is attended with a fine refreſhing breeze, much more grateful and deſirable than the return of light itſelf. *Vide Vatablum in locum.*

Pag. 13. *In the ſtreets and the broad way.*] Or it might be rendered, *In the paſſages and open avenues, or ſquares*: for שוקים *ſunt* viæ *per quas curritare hinc atque inde licet,* רחבות *latius quid ſignifiat. Prius a* שוק cucurrit, *alterum a* רחב latus fuit *ducitur.* Clerici Comment.

Ibid. *The watchmen, that go about,* &c.] The hypotheſis advanced in the Introduction that theſe *watchmen* are only eunuchs, whoſe buſineſs it was to watch over the women's apartments and patrole the royal incloſure, is favoured by the original word השמרים, here tranſlated *watchmen:* which literally ſignifies *keepers,* men ſet to *guard* or *keep* any thing. It comes from the root שמר which the lexicographers agree ſignifies *ſervare, conſervare; obſervare, cuſtodire; tenere, retinere,* &c. *curam, ſolicitudinem & diligentiam connotat, nè quid emittatur, elabatur, aut excutiatur. Curam etiam & cuſtodiam rei commiſſæ ſignificat, quod eſt rei vel perſonæ curam gerere.* Vid. Pagnin. Buxt. Robertſon, &c.

Pag. 14. *Into my mother's houſe,* &c.] If there is any truth in our ſuppoſition, that the ſcene of this whole poem lies within the incloſure of the women's apartments and adjoining pleaſure-grounds, then this houſe of the Bride's mother, may have been only ſome pavilion or temporary habitation aſſigned her within the ſame incloſure during the time of the nuptial ſolemnity *.

* *The word* בית, *which we render houſe, means any kind of habitation, of fixed and durable materials.* בית *(ſay the lexicographers)* "*eſt domus, ædes, domicilium, & generaliter omnis locus & receptaculum capiens aliquid.*" *Vid. Robertſoni Theſaur.*

Now it might well be expected that the friends of the BRIDE would attend her in the nuptial ſolemnity, to ſupport her ſpirits and relieve her modeſty; and if ſo, more eſpecially might the mother be admitted into the palace on that gay occaſion, and have apartments aſſigned her, without having her fixed abode there. Nor does it make any difference whether her mother's children, who had treated the BRIDE ſeverely in ſome earlier period of her life, were at that time in the palace with her or not. We have a very imperfect account of the ceremonies of marriage among the ancient Jews: but if we look into thoſe of other cotemporary nations, we ſhall find that the mother was always a buſy perſon on ſuch occaſions. And what is very remarkable, in Greece (which moſt certainly borrowed many of its cuſtoms from the Eaſt) one day of the nuptial ceremony was called ἀπαυλία, which Potter thus explains, "becauſe the Bride return-"ing to her Father's [or Mother's] houſe, did ἀπαυλί-"ζεσθαι τῷ νυμφίῳ, lodge apart from the Bridegroom. "Others will have it ſo called, becauſe the Bridegroom "lodged apart from his Bride at his father in-law's "houſe: 'tis poſſible both accounts may be right, and "that both Bridegroom and Bride might lie at her fa-"ther [or mother's] houſe, but in different beds." Vol. ii. p. 294, ed. 1728. Potter ſays this was on the third day, tho' others place this ſeparation on the ſeventh; and in different nations a day might be fixed on different from either. Now in the marriage of a prince, it is not eaſy to conceive how this circumſtance could be compli-ed with, without the parents, or at leaſt the mother's,

being taken into the palace, and having an apartment there aſſigned her. B.

Pag. 15. *What is this,* &c.] We here venture to propoſe an emendation of the original, and inſtead of מִי *who,* ſcruple not to read מָה *what.* That this was the true original word we have all the internal evidence that the context can afford. For not to mention how uncouth it ſounds to compare any *ſingle* perſon to *pillars* of ſmoke; the reply which follows evidently ſhews that the queſtion was WHAT. Had it been WHO IS THIS? to have anſwered *Solomon's bed* would have been foreign to the purpoſe; the proper reply could only have been *'Tis ſuch, or ſuch a perſon:* whereas if we read WHAT, the anſwer is proper and pertinent. The corruption was made very early, being copied in all the ancient verſions, but is eaſily accounted for, by ſuppoſing in ſome ancient copy the ה *He* was almoſt effaced, and the tranſcriber ſeeing only a ſmall veſtige of the letter miſtook it for a י *jod,* thus .

Ibid. *From towards the wilderneſs.*] מִן is here, and in p. 42, rendered with ſome latitude FROM TOWARDS, and not ſtrictly FROM, as I think it muſt be interpreted in Deut. xi. 24, and perhaps in ſome other places.

Ibid. *Behold his bed,* &c.] The reaſon for this bed's being introduced, will be ſeen hereafter, when we come to explain the ſixth day's eclogue, and to conſider the ſolemn conſummation of the marriage.

Pag. 15. But

But beſides the uſe of it there aſſigned, the ingenious friend whoſe remarks are diſtinguiſhed by the letter B, thinks "this piece of furniture may have been alſo intended for a preſent to the BRIDE. This at leaſt was the cuſtom of ancient Greece. On the third day called ἀπαυλία (deſcribed before) the Bride and her relations preſented gifts to the Bridegroom, and the BRIDEGROOM and his friends made preſents to the BRIDE. Theſe preſents conſiſted of golden veſſels, BEDS, COUCHES, plates, ointment boxes, &c. which were carried in great ſtate to the houſe of the new-married couple. See Potter vol. ii. pag. 294." B.

Pag. 16. *A bridal bed.*] The word אפריון (no where found but in this place) is by ſome rendered *a chariot*, by others *a bed*, or *bridal bed* (from פרה *fructum protulit*), perhaps it partook of the nature of both, was a kind of *Lectica geſtatoria*, as it is called by Mercer, a ſort of moveable bed, drawn or carried about in ſtate, not unlike the *Palanquins* uſed in other parts of Aſia, which anſwer at once both the purpoſes of reſt, and conveyance. For it ſhould ſeem that Solomon comes in it [pag. 17.] not, as uſual, in his paſtoral ſimplicity, but in the higheſt nuptial ſplendor *.

Ibid. *Is wrought ... by her whom he loveth among*, &c.] This is the interpretation of P. Houbigant: which however it muſt be confeſſed ſeems a little forced. Upon looking

* *After all, perhaps the word ought to be rendered* a Bridal pavilion. *See below Note on pag.* 33.

looking back we are inclined to follow the verſion of Le Clerc, and thus render the words "*The middle thereof is wrought 'in needle-work' by the daughters of Jeruſalem, 'as a teſtimony of their' love,* (or *out of regard.*) Le Clerc's words are "MEDIAMQUE ſtratam puellarum "Jeroſolymitarum amore." *Intelligo hæc de ſtragulis, &c. quibus Salomo donatus fuerat a puellis Jeroſolymitanis, ut obſervantiam et amorem ſuum erga eum oſtenderent.*

Pag. 17. *With the crown,* &c.] It was uſual with many nations to put crowns, or garlands, on the heads of new-married perſons. The *Miſnah* informs us that this cuſtom prevailed among the Jews; and it ſhould ſeem from the paſſage before us, that the ceremony of putting it on was performed by one of the parents: among the Greeks the Bride was crowned by her mother, as is inferred from the inſtance of Iphigenia in Euripides, ℣ 903. See Bochart in his *Geograph. Sacra,* p. 2. l. 1. c. 25, who ſuppoſes the nuptial crown and other ornaments of a bride alluded to in Ezek. xvi. 8—12. The nuptial crowns uſed among the Greeks and Romans, were only chaplets of leaves or flowers. Among the Hebrews they were not only of theſe, but alſo occaſionally of richer materials, as gold, ſilver, &c. according to the rank or wealth of the parties. See Selden's *Uxor Hebraica,* lib. ii. cap. 15. The original word uſed in the text is עטרה (derived from עטר *circumcinxit, circumtexit,*) which is the ſame that is uſed to expreſs a kingly *crown,* 2 Sam. xii. 30. 1 Chron. xx. 2, and is often deſcribed to be of *gold,* Eſth. viii. 15. Pſal. xxi. 4.

but appears to have been worn by thoſe that were NO kings, Job. xix. 9, &c. and was probably often compoſed of leſs valuable materials, as of enamel'd work; alſo of roſes, mirtle and olive leaves. *Vid. Seld. ubi ſupra.*

Pag. 18. *Thine eyes are 'ſparkling', &c. 'now' thy veil is removed.*] Or, *Thy veil being removed*; (literally *without thy veil.*) The Jewiſh maidens, before marriage, were under ſuch ſtrait confinement, and ſo rarely ſuffered to appear in public, that the very name for a virgin in Hebrew is עלמה *hidden.* This reſerve rendered the veil a very eſſential part of their dreſs *; and which, even when they were firſt preſented to their huſbands, they carefully drew over their faces, as we learn from the example of Rebecca, Gen. xxiv. 25. On what day of the marriage ceremony it was publickly laid aſide does not appear.

But among the Greeks it was thrown off on the THIRD day, for then the Bride for the firſt time appeared in public company without her veil, and received preſents from her huſband on that occaſion, which were thence called ἀναϰαλυπτήρια. See Potter. II. 294, &c. Now, if we ſuppoſe the ſame cuſtoms prevailed in Paleſtine, then the ſubject of this day's eclogue will relate to the ceremony of taking off the veil: then we ſhall account for the ſplendid gaiety of the Bridegroom's dreſs on ſo joyful an occaſion; and his compliments on her beauty will have a peculiar ſpirit and propriety. Now on the BRIDE's appearing for the firſt time in the public eyes of men, and that too

* *See Selden's Uxor Hebraica*, l. ii. c. 15.

in the preſence of the perſon, with whom ſhe was entering into the moſt endearing connections, it might well be expected that conſciouſneſs of beauty, tenderneſs, and exquiſite ſenſibility, mixing with virgin baſhfulneſs, ſhould improve the native luſtre of her eyes, and convey to them all that brightneſs and ſparkling, for which thoſe of the eaſtern doves are remarkable. B.

Ibid. *Thy hair is .. as .. goats, which come up ſleek*, &c.] Bochart refers the compariſon to the hair of the eaſtern goats, which is of the moſt delicate ſilky ſoftneſs, and is expreſsly obſerved by an ancient naturaliſt, to bear a great reſemblance to the fine curls of a woman's hair. *Vid. Hierozoic.* t. 1. l. 3. c. 15.—Le Clerc obſerves farther that the hair of the goats in Paleſtine is generally of a black colour, or of a very dark brown, ſuch as that of a lovely brunette may be ſuppoſed to be. *Compare* p. 3. *and note on* p. 37.

Which come up ſleek, ſcil. to JERUSALEM, which being the capital, it was uſual to ſpeak of aſcending to it from any part of Judea, as we ſay "Go UP to London". See Pſal. cxxii. 4. — גלשו is a word that occurs no where elſe, and it is difficult to aſcertain its meaning. The Rabbins interpret it *poliuntur, comuntur, decoræ fiunt ac ſi pectine pecterenter:* Bochart from the Gr. and Vulg. *aſcendunt:* we have choſen to expreſs both ſenſes in the tranſlation.—P. Houbigant's verſion is *Quæ pendent*, for which he aſſigns this reaſon, *tum, ut id congruat cum monte Galaad, velut in eo carmine Virgiliano,* "Dumoſa pen-" dere procul de rupe" — *tum vero ut retineatur ſimilitudo Capillorum, qui de capite pendent.*

Ibid. *Thy teeth are as a flock*, &c.] Theſe images are intended to denote that the BRIDE's teeth were—even—white—exactly paired or match'd—and the whole ſet entire and unbroken.

We have followed Le Clerc in rendering מתאימות ſimply *twins*; and שכלה, (not *barren*) but [*orba*] *deprived* ſcil. *of its fellow*, as in Jerem. xviii. 21. In defence of this verſion we refer the reader to the judicious note of that commentator.

Ibid. *A brede of ſcarlet.*] Or, as it might be rendered, *thread*, *lace*, *fillet*, *ribband*, &c.

Ibid. *As the flower of the Pomegranate*, &c.] We have here followed Caſtellus, tho' the more received interpretation is, *As a ſection of the pomegranate*. In either ſenſe, the words ſeem to be ſpoken in praiſe of the BRIDE's modeſty. The Bridegroom's meaning is, "that on the "removal of her veil, her cheeks glowed as red with "bluſhes, as the boſom, or flower of the pomegranate." If we conſider the great reſerve in which the eaſtern ladies were educated, we ſhall not wonder that on their appearing among men for the firſt time, the blood ſhould mount into the face in briſker floods than ordinary. B.

Pag. 19. *Thy neck is like the tower of David built upon an eminence*, &c.] As if he had ſaid "Thy neck is taper "and tall, gracefully riſing from thy ſhoulders, and "ſplendidly hung with jewels." This tower of David was probably remarkable for the elegance and nice pro-

portion of its ſtructure. Among the various interpretations given to the words בנוי לתלפיות, we have choſen to follow that of P. Houbigant, as it ſeems beſt to expreſs the ſituation of the neck, finely riſing from the ſhoulders.

Ibid. *Two young roes*, &c.] The original conveys a ſtill more delicate image, being literally *Two twin fauns of the roe*. The צבי or *Roe* is an animal of a reddiſh colour, that abounds in Judea, and is of ſuch exquiſite beauty, that it has thence its name. The word צבי ſignifies *lovelineſs*. See Bocharti Hierozoic. p. 1. l. 3. c. 25.

While the Fauns of the Roe are browſing among, or between the white lilies, only the little round convexity of their red backs is ſeen: and to this the compariſon ſeems peculiarly to refer.--In Syria the lilies grow common in the fields. Matt. vi. 28. *Vide Hierozoic.* t. 1. l. 3. c. 24.

Ibid. *This mountain of myrrhe*, &c.] Myrrhe and Frankincenſe were among the moſt valued perfumes of the eaſt: the Bridegroom therefore concludes his compliments on the Bride's Perſon, by comparing her to an entire heap of thoſe precious eſſences.

Pag. 20. *Come to me from Lebanon*, &c.] The ſummits of the mountains mentioned in the text were inhabited by wild beaſts: Judea was eſpecially infeſted with Lions. *Vide Bochart. Canaan & Hierozoicon.* The BRIDEGROOM's invitation here is not to be taken literally:

rally: The incloſure of the royal pleaſure-ground is ſtill the ſcene of action, and the words are only to be underſtood in a figurative ſenſe; he invites the Bride to his arms, as to a place of ſafety, and encourages her to look down in ſecurity amidſt any dangers ſhe was threatned with, or apprehenſive of: Lebanon, Amana, Shenir, and Hermon, were all of them places, where ſome dangers were to be apprehended, and it is an uſual beauty in poetry to repreſent a general idea by particulars, that largely partake of it; as here, Dangers by Dangerous places. B.

Ibid. *My ſiſter, 'my' ſpouſe.*] Or perhaps more literally, *My ſiſter-ſpouſe.* SISTER is either uſed here as a term of endearment: as it is by ſome underſtood in Prov. vii. 4. and Ahaſuerus calls himſelf the *brother* of Eſther, in Apocryph. Ch. xv. 8. — Or elſe it denotes that the Spouſe was related to the Bridegroom, or at leaſt of the ſame tribe with him. The Hebrews uſed the words *Brother* and *Siſter* to expreſs any, the moſt remote degree of conſanguinity.

Pag. 21. *With one glance of thine eyes.*] We cannot help being of the opinion of Le Clerc, that ſomething is either loſt out of the text, or ought to be underſtood after באחד; either ראי or ſome ſuch word, which we have ventured to ſupply in the tranſlation. The Maſorites ſenſible that the conſtruction was ungrammatical, have propoſed an emendation in the margin, באחת for באחד, עין being of the feminine gender.

Pag. 21. Ibid.

Ibid. *With one 'graceful' turn of thy neck,* &c.] The common verſion is *With one chain of thy neck.* ענק ſignifies primarily *(torques) a chain,* or material ornament; but the friend, ſo often quoted, thinks "it cannot here be taken literally without ſuppoſing Solomon to talk ſtrangely: his heart was ſtolen from him by one glance of her eye, all this is well and in nature; but it muſt be a very peculiar heart that is affected in the ſame manner by a diamond necklace: ſo that ענק *torques* cannot well be taken literally. If then a metaphor muſt be admitted, that propoſed in the text ſeems moſt natural: And what effect the graceful turn of a fine neck muſt have on a lover's heart, Horace will teach us, who (L. ii. O. 12.) ſpeaking of a beautiful woman, —*Dum fragrantia detorquet ad oſcula Cervicem.* — aſſigns this as a very inflammatory cauſe of love." B.

If the reader, after all, is not ſatisfied with the interpretation given in the text, he may, if he pleaſes, adopt that of the Vulgate, which is not inelegant; viz. *With one (curl,* or) *ringlet of thy neck.*

Ibid. *Thy lips .... drop as the honeycomb: Honey and milk,* &c.] Expreſſing her ſweet and melting words. A metaphor common with the Greek and Oriental writers: ſo Theocritus,

Τὸ ϛόμα ἢ ταχλᾶς γλυκερώτερον· ἐκ ϛομάτων δὲ
Ἐῤῥεῖ μοι φωνὰ γλυκερωτέρα ἢ μελικήρω. Id. xx.

Ibid. *The ſmell of thy garments.*] On nuptial occaſions the garments were remarkably perfumed. See Pſal. xlv. 9.

Ibid. *The ſmell of Lebanon.*] Lebanon abounded with various odoriferous trees, from which the fineſt gums were extracted, particularly Frankincenſe, from whence ſome derive the name of *Lebanon*, ſcil. from לבונה *frankincenſe.* See Chambers's Dict.

Ibid. *A garden ſhut up . . . a fountain ſealed.*] Theſe ſeem to have been eſtabliſhed metaphors applied by the Hebrews upon nuptial occaſions to ſignify the unſullied purity of the Bride, and the chaſtity and reſerve ſhe was to obſerve in the marriage-ſtate. Among the Jews at this day the Bridegroom before conſummation puts up a prayer to God in which is this petition, "Suffer not "a ſtranger to enter into the SEALED FOUNTAIN, that "the ſervant of our loves *(ſcil. the Bride)* may keep the "ſeed of holineſs and purity, and may not be barren." See Addiſon's *Preſent State of the Jews, Chap.* 5. Selden's *Uxor Hebraica. Lib.* iii. *Cap.* 2.

Pag. 22. *Thy productions*, &c.] The BRIDEGROOM having in the former ſentence called the BRIDE an *incloſed garden*; here carries on the metaphor, and compares her virtues and accompliſhments to all the choiceſt productions of an eaſtern orchard or paradiſe.—*Delicious fruits*; literally in the Heb. *Fruits of ſweetneſs.*

Ibid. *Aloes.*] 'Tis not the *herb*, but the *wood* of ALOES, which is here meant; this when dryed is of a very fragrant ſmell. Pſal. xlv. 8.—See Le Clerc's Com-

ment with regard to the other odoriferous plants here enumerated.

Ibid. *Awake*, &c.] She takes up the metaphor, and wiſhes ſhe could produce any thing to invite or pleaſure him.

The *northwind* is here deſired to blow, becauſe it is uſeful to cloſe up the pores of the trees, and to ſhut up their effluvia, that they may not ſpend themſelves too much: and the *ſouth-wind* coming in due ſeaſon relaxes them again, making the aromatic gums drop freely. Theſe are the only two deſirable winds in thoſe countries. See Patrick, Le Clerc, &c.

Pag. 23. *I eat my honeycomb with my honey.*] Taylor in his Concordance interprets this paſſage "*I have eaten* "*my 'pure' wood-honey, with my honey of the palm*:" explaining *Wood-honey* to be "that which in hot weather "burſts the comb, and runs down the hollow trees or "rocks, where in Judea the Bees made great ſtore of "honey." This interpretation has ſome conſiderable authorities in its favour, ſee *Bochart*, *Calaſio*, *Robertſon*, &c. Yet יערת דבש ſeems properly to ſignify a *honey-comb of honey*, in 1 Sam. xiv. 27, and דבש is evidently the *honey* of bees, in Judg. xiv. 8, 9, 18.—After all there is great reaſon to think that by one of theſe words is here meant the luſcious juice diſtilled from trees, as the BRIDE had juſt before been wiſhing for ſuch ſoft and kindly gales as would cauſe the plants in her garden to exſude their aromatic gums, &c.

Ibid. *And you, O friends*, &c.] This ſeems to be only a metaphorical expreſſion, inviting his friends to come

and feaſt on the ſight of their happineſs, and to ſympathize with them therein.

Pag. 24. *My undefiled.*] Or rather *My perfect one:* for תמה properly ſignifies *Compleatly accompliſhed:* one conſummately poſſeſſed of all endowments both of body and mind: from תמם *perfectus, abſolutus, completus, conſummatus eſt.* Vid. Calaſio.

Pag. 25. *His hand thro' the opening,* &c.] It was the ancient cuſtom to ſecure the door of a houſe by a croſs bar, or bolt, which by night was faſtened with a little button or pin; in the upper part of the door was left a round hole, through which any perſon from without, might thruſt his arm, and remove the bar, unleſs this additional ſecurity was ſuperadded. See Clerc's *Comment.* and Claud. Salmaſ. *in Solinum, p.* 649.

Ibid. *My hands dropped with myrrhe,* &c.] She got up in ſuch haſte, that ſhe ſpilt upon her hand the veſſel of liquid myrrhe, which ſhe had brought to anoint and refreſh his head, after having been expoſed to the inclemencies of the night.

The Bride here expreſſes the greatneſs of her affection by the coſtlineſs of the unguents ſhe brings on this occaſion. For it was not barely מור *Myrrhe,* which was one of the moſt excellent ſpices (Joh. xix. 39.) but the moſt *precious myrrhe* מור עבר *current* or *paſſing myrrhe:* being (according to Bochart) that myrrhe which *wept* or dropt from the tree of itſelf; this as it was the moſt unctuous, ſo it was the richeſt and beſt for all man-

ner of uſes: and therefore is not ill paraphraſed in our verſion by *Sweet-ſmelling myrrhe*. See Patrick. Boch. *Phaleg*. II. 22, &c. — Le Clerc underſtands by מור עבר *current myrrhe*, that kind of myrrhe, which is moſt paſſable in traffic, ſuch as is fine, pure and unadulterated. See Gen. xxiii. 16.

Ibid. *They hurt me.*] Or *made me ſorely ſmart*; for that פצע does not always ſignify a ghaſtly *wound*, but ſometimes ſuch ſharp cuts or ſtripes, as are inflicted by wholeſome diſcipline, appears from Prov. xx. 30, and xxvii. 6.

Ibid. *Plucked my veil off me.*] This paſſage is not to be underſtood, as by the generality of commentators, in the ſenſe of taking away her veil from her, but only taking it off either to know her or expoſe her. B.

Ibid. *What ſhould you tell him.*] P. Houbigant propoſes an emendation here, הגידנו for תגידו and gives theſe words to the VIRGINS. "*What ſhould* WE *tell* "*him?*" SPOUSE, "*That I am ſick of love.* But there ſeems to be no occaſion for this alteration.

Pag. 27. *White and ruddy.*] That is, of a charming red and white. Bochart contends that צח ואדם is *ſhining white* (Vid. Hierozoic) but the literal verſion preſents a more natural and pleaſing image.

Ibid. *The moſt fine gold.*] A metaphorical expreſſion to denote conſummate excellence and beauty. *Sanctius.*

Ibid. *His eyes are as*, &c.] That is, "his eyes are "ſparkling, and yet mild like thoſe of milk-white doves, "when they are delighted as they ſit by the waterſide." See Patrick, Bochart, &c.

Pag. 28. *His cheeks*, &c. *His lips*, &c.] The former part of the verſe alludes to the downy beard of the youthful BRIDEGROOM. His lips may be compared to the Lilies on account of their ſilky ſoftneſs: tho' Patrick ſuppoſes it alludes to Lilies of a deep rich red colour, and particularly to that called by Pliny *Rubens Lilium*, which he tells us, was much eſteemed in Syria.

The expreſſion of *Lilies dropping ſweet-ſmelling* (or *precious*) *myrrhe*; denotes the ſweetneſs of his converſation; and is ſuppoſed by Sir Thomas Brown to refer to "the roſcid and honey drops obſervable in the "flowers of Martagon and inverted-flowered Lilies, and "is probably the ſtanding ſweet dew on the white eyes "of the Crown-imperial, now common among us." See *Obſervations*, &c.

Ibid. *Inlaid with ſapphires.*] We here follow the Vulgate, which renders the original, *Diſtinctus ſapphiris*, and ſeems preferable to any of the more modern interpretations. The ſeptuagint appears to have underſtood the word מעלפת, as an adverb, (if they did not read here מעלה in the ſenſe of *ſuper*.) Their interpretation is "*His belly is an ivory caſket over a ſaphire ſtone*;" meaning that the blue veins were ſeen thro' his clear ſnowy

 ſkin,

ſkin, like a ſapphire ſtone through a thin tranſparent plate of ivory. A fine image! B.

Ibid. *Pedeſtals of fine gold.*] Alluding to his ſandals bound upon his feet with golden ribbands. See Patrick. Or perhaps expreſſive of the feet themſelves, as being of a redder tincture than his white legs and thighs.

Pag. 30, *Beautiful .... as Tirzah.*] *Tirzah* was a beautiful ſituation in the tribe of Ephraim, afterwards choſen by Jeroboam for his place of reſidence till he removed to Samaria. 1 Kings xiv. 17. xv. 21, 23. The etymology of the name ſignifies a *Delightful* city: from רצה *delectatus eſt.* See Patrick.

Ibid. *Graceful* (or *comely*) *as Jeruſalem.*] Jeruſalem was eſteemed the moſt charming place in all Paleſtine, and is called by Jeremiah *The Perfection of Beauty.* Lam. ii. 15.

Ibid. *Dazzling as bannered hoſts.*] אימה is properly *amazing, exciting awe* and *conſternation, terrible,* and here by a ſynecdoche of the effect for the cauſe, *dazzling.* This paſſage is finely illuſtrated by a modern poet:

" *Awfully gay, as glittering hoſts appear,*
" *Majeſtically ſweet, and amiably ſevere.*"

Pag. 31. *Threeſcore queens and fourſcore concubines,* &c.] Some commentators ſuppoſe this not to be ſpoken by Solomon, as of his own practice at this time, but as that

 of

of other neighbouring princes: but this is confuted by the next ſentence but one below. Bochart more juſtly infers from this paſſage, that Solomon compoſed this poem at the beginning of his reign, before he had run into the vaſt exceſſes he did afterwards. 1 Kings xi. 1, &c.

Pag. 32. *Looketh forth as the morning.*] So Theocritus ſpeaks of the Grecian Helen. Idyll. xviii.

Ἀὼς ἀντέλλοισα καλὸν διέφαινε πρόσωπον,
——Ὣδε καὶ ἁ χρυσέα Ἑλένα διεφαίνετ' &c.

" *As riſing Morn diſplays her lovely face,*
" ——*So ſhone the golden Helen forth*——

Ibid. *Fair as the moon, bright as the ſun, dazzling, &c.*] יפה is *fair* with regard to the complexion: ſee 1 Sam. xvii. 42. ברה is properly *clear, unſullied, of unobſcured ſplendour*, and therefore is well applied to the glowing ſurface of the great orb of day. אימה *dazzling* ſee explained above, pag. 80.

Ibid. *As all the ſtarry hoſt,*] The gradation of images ſo naturally leads to the interpretation here given, that it ſeems impoſſible the paſſage could have had any other meaning; and one could more eaſily ſuppoſe the Hebrew text to have been corrupted, than that the Poet would have fallen into ſuch a ſtrange obliquity of ideas, as the common verſion ſuppoſes. But if we examine the original with a little attention, I think it will be found to exhibit the meaning here aſſigned.——The word נדגלות *bannered troops* is allowed to be ſynony-

mous to צבא an *hoſt* or *army*: now the ſtars and celeſtial orbs collectively are ſcarce ever expreſſed in ſcripture by any other name, than צבא השמים *The hoſt of heavens.* (Deut. iv. 19. Neh. ix. 6. Dan. viii. 10, &c, &c.) and if the word השמים *Heavens* be dropt, then ſimply by the plural צבאות *hoſts:* for ſo a learned expoſitor interprets that frequent expreſſion *The Lord of hoſts.* "Deus Zebaoth, ſays he, *dicitur dominus exercituum: cujus exercitus eſt ſol, luna, ſtellæ, &c. qui excubias agunt in ordine ſuo.*" (Avenarius apud Robertſon.) If this expoſition be allowed, then צבאות ſtands ſimply for the heavenly orbs, as here נדגלות is preſumed to do in the text: and Solomon will be found to have preferred the latter word, though leſs uſual, with great propriety, as it beſt expreſſes that glittering appearance in an hoſt or army to which the compariſon peculiarly refers. As for צבאות, it is interpreted by the Lexicographers, "*Exercitus, copiæ militantium et ſtrenuè perficientium functiones ad quas ſunt vocati: ita ut* STELLÆ *ordinatæ tanquam in militia dicuntur Exercitus Domini; ut* 1 *Sam.* v. 10, *&c.* Jehova deus exercituum: *et per ellipſin,* Jehova exercituum." 1 *Sam.* i. 3, *&c.* Vide plura in Robertſoni Theſaur. 860. 862.

Pag. 33. *The ſixth day's eclogue.*] We learn from the Talmud that marriage was perfected among the Hebrews by three things. 1. בכסף *argento,* by Dower. 2. בשטר *ſcripto,* by Writing. 3. בביאה *coitu,* by Conſummation. Hence is that ſaying of theirs, *Quid ſunt uxores, et quid ſunt concubinæ? Uxores ſunt cum inſtrumento, dote, et ſponſalibus; concubinæ neque cum hâc nec illâ.*

illâ. "What is the difference between wives and con-
"cubines? The marriage-writings, the dowry, and the
"ſolemn eſpouſals diſtinguiſh the Wife: the Concubine
"hath none of theſe." See Weemes's *Chriſtian Syna-
gogue*, 1663. 4to. p. 197.

Godwyn and ſome others have ſuppoſed the above were three different ways of contracting among the Jews; but it is much more likely that they all regularly united in forming and confirming the ſame contract *. The marriage might be conſidered as valid by the two former, after which the young couple might be permitted to cohabit, as ſeems to have been done in the preſent caſe, pag. 8, 9, &c. but after this, to make the contract ſtill more ſolemn and notorious, the Bride was undreſſed by the bridemaids, the new-married couple were put into bed, and ſeen together publickly by the children of the bride-chamber. If it be aſked why this was not done ſooner, the firſt day for inſtance? perhaps to ſpare the Bride's bluſhes, till ſhe had ſomewhat got the better of her virgin modeſty. It is very probable that the day called by the Greeks ἀνακαλυπτήριον was appropriated to this ſolemnity (Vid. Potter II. p. 294.) and if it was obſerved any where, it would not be omitted, we may be ſure, by a people that dealt ſo much in ceremonies and external uſages, as the Jews and other eaſtern nations. If all this be conſidered, together with what follows in this day's eclogue, we ſhall not be thought extravagant in ſuppoſing the ſubject of it to be the ſolemn putting to bed of the bride and bridegroom. B

* *Vide Seldn Uxor Hebraica, Lib.* ii. *Cap.* 1. *Item, Cap.* 13.

This ceremony was antiently performed under אֹהֶל *a tent* or *pavilion* made for that purpoſe, which had the peculiar name of חֻפָּה Hhuppa, *Thalamus* *, "The Bride-chamber;" alluded to in Pſal. xix. 4, 5. In imitation of which the Jews in Barbary to this day ſolemnize their marriages during the ſummer months under bowers and arbours. (See Addiſon's preſ. State of the Jews, p. 51. Godwyn, p. 232.) Some ſuch tent, or bower, we are to ſuppoſe was placed in the *Garden of nuts:* and the fine Bed, which made its appearance in the third day's eclogue was brought there for this purpoſe, if it was not rather the *Tent* or *Pavilion* itſelf that was ſo brought; for upon looking back I find many of the beſt critics incline to this opinion †, and the eſcort of threeſcore valiant men that were to guard it in the night, ſeems much more ſuitable to ſuch a moveable edifice, than meerly to a piece of furniture to be lodged within it.

Ibid. *The garden of nuts.*] The nut-tree is a plant which delights in a cold climate, and therefore muſt have been valued as a rare and curious exotic in Solomon's gardens. Joſephus ſpeaks of it as an uncommon proof of the fine temperature of the air that this ſhrub flouriſhed

* *Seld. Uxor Heb. Lib.* ii. *c.* 13.

† מטה Lectus *is ſuppoſed by Grotius to ſtand for* Cubiculum, *by Synecdoche of a part for the whole: and the word* אפריון *is by many learned expoſitors rendered* Thalamus Sponſarum, umbraculum, tentorium, tabernaculum, *and is by ſome derived from* אפר velum *ſeu* linteum. *Vid. plura in Pol. Synopſ.*

flouriſhed in Galilee, near the lake of Geneſareth, along with plants of a warmer region. *Bell. Jud. lib.* iii. c. 35.

Ibid. *The vine flouriſhed*, &c.] More exactly *Whether the vine budded forth:* and ſo in page 39.

After the words *Pomegranates bloſſomed*, the Septuagint has an addition Ἐκεῖ δώσω τὰς μαστούς μου σοὶ, which was either brought hither by miſtake from pag. 39. or elſe they read here in the copy they made uſe of שם אתן את דודי לך, which may be rendered, *That I might there grant thee my love.*

Pag. 34. *O bride of Solomon.*] שולמית *Shulamith*, SHULAMITE is evidently formed from שלמה *Shelomoh*, SOLOMON, as *Charlotte* from *Charles*, &c. and is equivalent to *Wife* or *Bride of Solomon.*

Ibid. *What do you expect*, &c.] More literally, *What would* (or *will*) *you ſee in the Shulamite?* or *What do you look for in the Shulamite?* ANSWER. *As it were the conflict* (or perhaps more exactly, *the ruſhing together*) *of two armies.* מחולה ſignifies *a ruſhing together after the manner of dancers.*

Pag. 35. *Thy feet in ſhoes.*] Or more exactly *Within 'thy' ſandals.* The Hebrew women were remarkably nice in adorning their ſandals, and in having them fit neatly ſo as to diſplay the fine ſhape of the foot. *Vid. Clerici comment.* Judith's ſandals are mentioned along with the bracelets and other ornaments of Jewels, with

which ſhe ſet off her beauty when ſhe went to captivate the heart of Holofernes, Chap. x. 4. And it is expreſsly ſaid, that *her ſandals raviſhed his eyes*, Chap. xvi. 9.

Ibid. *O prince's daughter.*] The word נָדִיב here rendered *Prince*, is in Pſal. xlvii. 10. and in Pſal. cvii. 40. uſed in the plural number to denote the Hebrew chiefs or rulers of the tribes. נְדִיבִים is properly *(munifici) munificent*, and therefore ſeems beſt to anſwer to our Engliſh word *Nobles*, by which it is expreſsly rendered in our common tranſlation, Iſaiah xiii. 2.

The BRIDE was probably the daughter of ſome Jewiſh lord, who dwelt in or near Jeruſalem. It ſhould ſeem that her father was dead before ſhe was received into the number of Solomon's wives: this is inferred, from his being no where mentioned in the poem; from the contract's being wholly managed by the mother, p. 42; and from the Bride's being at the time of her marriage (and it ſhould ſeem had been for ſome time before, p. 25.) poſſeſſed of the vineyard ſhe brought with her as her dowry.—Nay it can hardly be imagined that ſhe would be expoſed to ill treatment from the *Children of her mother* (ſc. by a former marriage, p. 3.) if ſhe had not loſt her father, while ſhe was an infant.

As for the common hypotheſis, that the BRIDE was Pharaoh's daughter, mentioned in 1 Kings xi. 1, &c. it is incompatible with many circumſtances in the poem, and indeed is contrary to the whole tenor of it. Compare pag. 14, 16, 40, 44, 45, &c.

Ibid. *Thy navel is*, &c.] Bp. Patrick thinks this and the following paſſage only deſcriptive of the figures wrought on the Bride's garments: or perhaps inſinuating that ſhe ſhould not be barren, than which there could not be a higher compliment paid to a Hebrew wife. It may be rendered *will not want*, &c.

Pag. 36. *A heap of wheat ſet about with lilies.*] It was uſual with the Jews, when their wheat had been threſhed out and fanned, to lay it in heaps. (Ruth. iii. 7. Hag. ii. 16.) and as their threſhing-floors were in the open air, in order to keep off the cattle they ſtuck them round with thorns (Hoſ. ii. 5, 6.) Theſe in compliment to the Spouſe are here converted into a fence of lilies. *Vid. Poli Synopſ.* Or we may ſuppoſe with Lamy that Solomon here alludes to a cuſtom they might have in Paleſtine of ſtrewing flowers round the heaps of corn after it was winnowed *. See his *Apparatus Biblicus*.

Ibid. *Like two young roes*, &c.] Or more literally, *Thy two paps reſemble two twin fauns of the roe*. See above, page 72.

* *Wheat and barley were among the ancient Hebrews emblems of fertility: and it was uſual for the ſtanders-by to ſcatter theſe grains upon the new-married couple, accompanying it with a wiſh, that they might increaſe and multiply. Perhaps the paſſage in the text is a prediction of the Bride's fertility.* Vid. Selden's Uxor Hebraica, Lib. ii. Cap. 15.

Pag. 37. *The treſſes of thy head 'ſhine' like ſcarlet.*] Some critics contend that the word דלת (which occurs no where elſe) ſhould be here tranſlated *The fillet* or *hairlace* in which her treſſes were elegantly bound up. But if this were the meaning, the כ would be redundant in כארגמן; it ſeems more natural therefore, with all the ancient verſions, to interpret it of the *Hair*. Perhaps the whole paſſage ſhould be rendered *The treſſes of thy head are like purple*; for Le Clerc has proved by a ſufficient number of quotations, that among the Greeks and eaſtern nations the favourite colour in hair, was to have it black towards the roots, but lightly tinged with gold towards the extremities, *Introrſus quidem nigras, ad extremum vero rutilantes ſeu cum florido tyriæ conchæ colore certantes.* Vide Caliſtrat. apud Clericum, et Anacreon Carm. 28. & Carm. 29, &c.

P. Houbigant renders this and the following paſſage, *Cirri capitis tui velut purpura regia, nodo pendens ex laquearibus:* It muſt be acknowledged that רהיטנו ſignifies *our cielings* in pag. 7. but רהטים is allowed by the beſt expoſitors to ſignify here an outward *paſſage* or *gallery* leading to an apartment, from the Chaldee רהט *cucurrit, feſtinavit.* See Buxt. Calaſio, &c.

Pag. 38. *I will go up to*, &c.] Or will *climb up into 'this my' palm-tree.* The palm-tree is remarkably tall, ſtrait, and well-ſhaped. See Brown's *Obſervations.*

Dates are the fruit of the *Palm-tree*, they grow in cluſters.

Ibid. *And thy Speech, &c.*] Literally it is, *thy Palate*, which is uſed here figuratively for *the Speech*, that iſſues thence.—All the expoſitors have hitherto been able to make ſo little ſenſe of this very obſcure and difficult paſſage, that we cannot help ſuppoſing, with P. Houbigant, ſome corruption to have crept into the original; which he thus propoſes to reſtore; וחכך כיין הטוב הולך לחכי למשרים דובב שפתי ושנים, *Et Palatum* (ſc. *Eloquium*) *tuum quaſi vinum dulce, in palatum meum intrans ſuaviter, adrepens leniter intra labia et dentes.* Where inſtead of לדודי *dilecto meo* he propoſes לחכי *palato meo:* דובב he interprets *adrepens* agreeably to the Arabic דב *obrepere, adrepere*; tho', as the word דובב occurs no where elſe, he is in doubt whether we ſhould not read דובק, *adhærens*, as Symmachus appears to have done: and laſtly inſtead of ישנים *dormientium*, he reads ושנים *et dentes*, along with the Septuagint, Syriac, and Vulgate, as well as Aquila and Symmachus.—After all, his moſt exceptionable alteration, that of לדודי into לחכי, need not take place, ſince we may with Junius and Tremellius conſider לדודי as in the plural number, *ad amores*, (with the final letter ם cut off by apocope *euphoniæ gratia* *) and underſtand it adverbially, as well as the next word למשרים; *iens amantiſſimè rectiſſiméque.* Vid. Prov. xxiii. 31.

* *As* הכרי *in* 2 *Kings* xi. 19. עמי *in Pſal.* cxliv. 2. *and* רמני *in Cantic.* viii. 2.

Ibid. *And his deſire is 'fixed' upon me.*] Or, as in the common tranſlation, *His deſire is towards me.*

Pag. 39. *The fineſt Flowers,* &c.] "The word here, "which is commonly rendered *Mandrakes*, a very diſa- "greeable ſtinking plant, is in the original דודאים "DUDAIM, which Ludolphus hath happily conjec- "tured to ſignify the fruit, which the Arabians call "MAUZ or MUZ, (ſtyled by ſome the Indian Fig:) "which in Abyſſinia is as big as a cucumber, and of "the ſame ſhape: fifty of theſe grow on the ſame ſtalk, "and are of a very ſweet taſte and ſmell: from which "cognation of many on the ſame ſtalk they were called "DUDAIM: which ſome derive from דוד *Dod*, as it "ſignifies either *love*, or a *breaſt*, to which this fruit is "thought to bear ſome reſemblance." PATRICK.

The above is an ingenious conjecture, yet 'till it is confirmed by the obſervation of travellers, that ſuch a plant was ever ſeen in Paleſtine, it was thought proper to render the paſſage only in general terms, as Piſcator, Junius and Tremellius have done, who tranſlate it *Amabiles flores.*

Ibid. *In our hoards.*] This is only a paraphraſe of the original which literally is *Over* or *At our gates:* The gates in Judea were uſually large buildings, and we may ſuppoſe the repoſitory for fruits was, either *over* them or *near* them. Inſtead of על פתחינו, *ſuper portas noſtras*, P. Houbigant would tranſpoſe one letter and read על תפחינו *in noſtris malis aureis.* He adds, "*Nimi-*

" *rum ait Sponſa ſe ſuo dilecto aſſervaſſe* mala citrea, *tam*
" *nova, quam vetera, i. e. verna, autumnalia.*"

Sanctius ſuppoſes this paſſage relates to the cuſtom of decking the gates of new-married perſons with feſtoons of fruit and flowers.

Pag. 40. *I would be conſtantly*, &c.] Or more literally *Thou ſhouldſt be conſtantly with me* תלמדני. The interpretation of P. Houbigant is here adopted, who paraphraſes the original thus, " ASSIDUA ESSEM TECUM, *i. e. eſſet mihi quotidiana conſuetudo non tantummodo taciti congreſſus. Nam poteſtatem talem non reſpuit verbum* למד.

Ibid. *Drink of my ſpiced.*] The Hebrews were wont to mix aromatic drugs with their wine.—It was one of their nuptial rites, for the Bride and Bridegroom to drink together out of the ſame cup: Sanctius thinks this ceremony is here alluded to, and I cannot help being of his opinion; for, this admitted, the words have a very emphatical and ſpirited meaning, eſpecially if we ſuppoſe the bride at that inſtant preſenting the *ſpiced bowl* to her huſband. The ceremonies obſerved by the modern Jews on this occaſion may be ſeen in Selden's *Uxor Hebraica, lib.* ii. *cap.* 7.

Pag. 42. *I excited thee*, &c.] Theſe words have great difficulties in them. All the Greek fathers and many of the Latin attribute them to the BRIDEGROOM: (See *Patrick*) But the Hebrew writers in general aſſign them to the BRIDE on account of the ך THEE, which, as the Maſſorites have pointed it, is of the maſc. gender. Yet

notwithſtanding the authority of the Maſoretic *point*, we venture to give this paſſage to the BRIDEGROOM, and to interpret it as we have done: for thus it has an eaſy conſiſtent ſenſe, and is moſt ſuitable to the context. [It is to be underſtood as a ſolemn recapitulation of the contract the new-married couple had entered into, and of the ratification it had received from the mother. For in the early ages virgins were not to marry without the conſent of parents. So it was in Greece (See *Potter's Antiq.*) and ſo it doubtleſs ever was in the eaſtern countries. B.]

I excited, or *ſolicited thee* עוררתיך literally is *I raiſed* or *ſtirred thee up*, ſc. *to love*. The turn here given to this paſſage is ſuggeſted by Mercerus; *Excitavi te, nempe ad amorem.*—THERE *thy mother* חבלתך *pledged* or *engaged thee*. חבל is allowed to ſignify *pignoravit* in Conjug. Kal, and no reaſon can be aſſigned why it ſhould not in ſome inſtances retain the ſame ſenſe in Conjug. Pihel, though perhaps ſomewhat augmented, ſc. *ſolemnly pledged* or *engaged*. This interpretation is propoſed by P. Houbigant: חלבה *oppignoravit*, i. e. *promiſit et ſpopondit mihi te meam futuram*. [If it is after all contended that this paſſage muſt be rendered, *There thy mother brought forth* or *was delivered of thee*; it may ſtill be interpreted of her mother's giving her conſent to the marriage, either on account of the pangs ſhe felt at parting with her, or rather as the delivering her over to a huſband's family was a kind of regeneration, a giving as it were a ſecond life to her. B.]

Pag. 43. *O ſet me as a ſeal*, &c.] That is, place me ſo that I may never ſlip out of thy memory or affection. This requeſt I make out of fervent love: which is ſtrong or irreſiſtible as death, eſpecially when heightened by jealouſy or a fear of loſing the beloved object.

Ibid. *The ſparks thereof are ſparks of fire.*] Or rather, as Dr. Hammond has excellently illuſtrated this paſſage, *The darts* (or *arrows*) *thereof are darts of fire, of a moſt vehement flame:* Implying that love ſhoots into the heart, wounds it and burns there; nay inflames it vehemently by the wounds it gives. The metaphor is taken from an arrow ſhot out of a bow, which by the ſwiftneſs of it's motion takes fire; or perhaps alluding to the fiery arrows that were ſometimes made uſe of for the ſame purpoſes as fire-balls among us. The Septuagint countenance this latter verſion by rendering the words πτερύγια ἀυτῆς πτερύγια πυρὸς, *the feathers* or *wings thereof are wings of fire.* (See Hammond on Pſal. lxxvi. 3. and Robertſon ad verb רפש.)–The Hebrew word שלהבתיה here tranſlated a *moſt vehement flame*, ſignifies literally *the fiery flame of the Lord*, which in the Hebrew idiom denotes mighty and exceeding ſcorching flames. Patrick thinks it is compounded of the three words אש *fire* להב *flame* יה *the Lord.* (Sed vide Lexicographos apud *Robertſon.*)

Pag. 44. *If ſhe be a wall, we will build upon her two ſilver towers.*] We have here followed the interpretation

of P. Houbigant, who ſuppoſes טירת, to be written defectively for טירות in the dual number, ſc. *duas turres*, "*Nam id jocosè* (he adds) *ut eo in Cantico alia mul-*
"*ta de tenellæ ſororis geminis mammis dicitur*".

The meaning of the paſſage is, "We will take care "of her in proportion, as ſhe is capable of receiving "or profiting by our bounty: like as men are wont to "build upon good foundations." The Orientals delight thus to expreſs themſelves by parables or compariſons. The BRIDE's anſwer ſhews that the BRIDEGROOM alludes to the SISTER's degree of growth.

Pag. 45. *My vineyard*, &c.] Though it was uſual among the Jews for the huſband to endow his ſpouſe with a ſum of money at their marriage, yet the Bride alſo brought a portion to her huſband. This was ſometimes more and ſometimes leſs, and was called by the Rabbies נדוניא *nedunia*. "Raguel gave with his daughter Sa-"rah, half his goods, ſervants and cattle, and money." Tobit x. 10. See *Godwyn*.

From their being mentioned together we are to ſuppoſe that the Bride's vineyard lay contiguous to that of Solomon at *Baal-hamon*; which, according to Aben-Ezra, was a place near *Jeruſalem* where abundance of people had vineyards. (See *Patrick*)—That, in ſome circumſtances, a vineyard might be a very deſirable acquiſition to a Hebrew monarch we learn from the ſtory of Naboth and Ahab.—By *pieces of ſilver* here are underſtood *ſhekels:* ſuppoſed to be in value each about 2*s* 4*d* 1*q*.

SUBSEQUENT REMARKS

FROM THE NEW EDIT. OF DR. LOWTH'S PRÆLECT. WITH MR. PROF. MICHAELIS'S NOTES.

Pag. 60.

PAG. 8. *O bring me*, &c.] Mr. Michaelis interprets this, "*He hath brought me into the wine-cave: and his banner againſt me is love.*" i.e. "He attacks me under the banner of love." He ſuppoſes the Bridegroom, agreeably to his paſtoral character, hath brought the Bride into ſome cool grotto, where was his hoard of wine and fruits.

Ibid.

Ibid. *Support me*, &c.] According to Mr. Michaelis, this ſhould be rendered "*ſupport me with verdant herbs: ſpread 'fragrant' fruits under me; for I am wounded with love.* See his reaſons for this verſion.

Pag. 61.

Pag. 9. *Awake 'my' love*, &c.] M. Michaelis propoſes a different punctuation of the word אַהֲבָה, ſc. אַהֲבָה. *'Awake 'this' lovely (or amiable) 'perſon.'*

Pag. 69.

Pag. 69.

Pag. 18. *Thine eyes*, &c.] Mr. Michaelis would render מבעד, POST; *Behind thy veil*. The verſion in the text is ſupported by Noldius, who tranſlates it EXTRA.

Pag. 70.

Ibid. *Thy hair is*, &c.] Mr. Michaelis thinks the interpretation of this difficult place may be, *Thy hair is like a flock of aſcending goats, 'which is ſeen' from mount Gilead*: ſuppoſing the point of compariſon chiefly to turn on the head's being covered with fine flowing locks, as mount Gilead was with the ſhaggy herd, reaching in an extended line from its foot to its ſummit.

Pag. 71.

Ibid. *Thy teeth*, &c.] Dr. Hunt obſerves that the Arabic תאם ſignifies not only *Gemellos parere*, but alſo *Socium habere*, which might be admitted here. *They have all companions*.

Pag. 78.

Pag. 27. *The moſt fine gold*, &c.] Mr. Michaelis ſuppoſes that *The head* is here ſaid to be *of fine gold*; and *The hands* in the next page are called *golden cylinders* (for ſo he tranſlates it) *ſet with chryſolites*; in alluſion to the eaſtern cuſtom of tinging the hair, the face, arms and hands, with a vegetable ſubſtance called Henna, which gives them a yellowiſh, or golden tincture: gold duſt itſelf being ſometimes uſed for the ſame pupoſe. The Chryſolite was a ſtone of a golden colour.

Ibid.

Ibid.

Ibid. *His locks are curled.*] Mr. Michaelis interprets תלתלים, *dactylorum involucra*, and finds a ſimilar word in Arabic ſignifies *Spatha palmarum*. A gentleman, who has travelled into thoſe countries where the palm-tree flouriſhes, aſſures me, that the hair may be very aptly compared to the fine wavy young leaves of the palm, on their firſt burſting forth from the *ſpatha* or ſheath in which they are contained: but that neither the fruit, nor the *involucra* bear any reſemblance to hair.

Pag. 79.

Pag. 28. *Inlaid with ſapphires.*] Mr. Michaelis renders this, *His belly is an ivory plate incloſed with ſapphire*; ſuppoſing it to expreſs the white ſkin covered with a purple robe.

Pag. 88.

Pag. 37. *The treſſes*, &c.] Mr. Michaelis thinks the word ארגמן does not here ſignify the purple colour, but the *Murex*, or Tyrian ſhell-fiſh, which produces that colour. The beautiful ſpiral conch of this fiſh might be very aptly compared to the fine treſſes of an eaſtern lady's head, wound up into a pyramidal form, and plaited round with ribbands. The paſſage might be rendered, *The treſſes of thy head reſemble the 'fine' purple ſhell-fiſh.*

The words מלך אסור בבהטים, he renders, *The king is incircled in an upright* (or *erect*) *turban:* in oppoſition to ſuch turbans as hang down. But the verſion we had adopted ſeems to anſwer the context.

Pag. 90.

Pag. 39. *The fineſt flowers*, &c.] Mr. Michaelis thinks the common *Mandrakes* are here underſtood, and that they are mentioned on account of their ſuppoſed quality in exciting love: being uſed in philters all over the eaſt. Thus, the words might be rendered, *The mandrakes give their ſtrong ſmell.* Mr. Michaelis paraphraſes them, *Jam et ſomnifero odore venereus mandragoras, late olens, ſpirat ſuadetque amores.*

Pag. 92.

Pag. 42. *I excited thee*, &c.] According to Mr. Michaelis this paſſage might be rendered, *Under an apple-* (or *fruit-*) *tree I found thee: there thy mother contracted thee to me.* In this poem, agreeably to the paſtoral manners, the bridegroom repreſents the bride's mother as having yielded to his ſuit beneath the ſhade of ſome tree, and there promiſed him her daughter's conſent.

MARGINAL NOTE OMITTED, PAG. 82.

Line 10. *In ordine ſuo* *.

* *It is an obſervation of the learned Joſ. Mede, that in Ezra, Nehemiah, Daniel, and the laſt chap. of Chronicles (the books written after the captivity) God is ſtiled the* Lord of Heaven, *who in other places of ſcripture is called the* Lord of Hoſts. *Diſc.* xxiv.

POST-

POSTSCRIPT.

AFTER the foregoing work was committed to the preſs, appeared a new edition of the PRÆLECTIONES accompanied with learned and ingenious Notes by Mr. Profeſſor Michaelis, of His Majeſty's univerſity of Gottingen. From theſe, extracts have been given in the four preceding pages. But what is of moſt conſequence to obſerve, Mr. Profeſſor hath controverted the opinion, which is the baſis of this whole work, viz. that the SONG OF SOLOMON is a nuptial poem, and deſcribes the ſeven days of the marriage feaſt.

He objects to its being written on a nuptial occaſion, becauſe he cannot find that the marriage ceremonies are once deſcribed throughout the poem: the veiling of the ſpouſe, the conſummation, the ſolemn feaſting are not related: and he thinks it ſurprizing that the bridegroom ſhould be ſo intent on his rural labours, as to be abſent whole days both from the bride and marriage-gueſts, in order to tend ſheep; and ſhould even paſs the nights apart from his beloved ſpouſe.

He has alſo given a different interpretation of chap. II. 4—9, to ſhew that there is no ſuch break after the verſe, *I charge you, O ye daughters*, &c. (pag. 9.) as can juſtify the diviſion into two days.

If the other objections can be anſwered, this laſt will fall of courſe, becauſe his diviſion is full as arbitrary as any he oppoſes; and how unnaturally the words ℣ 9. *Behold he ſtood*, &c. (p. 10.) are ſeparated from ℣ 10. *My beloved ſpake*, &c. (p. 11.) let the reader judge in any tranſlation.

In anſwer to his firſt objection it might be ſufficient to refer the reader to the preceding commentary and verſion. Wherein it is ſhown, that although the nuptial ceremonies as they are at preſent practiſed among the Jews, are not formally deſcribed in the poem, yet many of them are alluded to. But if the tranſlation there given ſhould be controverted, and even other ſenſes aſſigned to the words: ſtill the objection is eaſily anſwered.

In the firſt place it may be obſerved, that the Jewiſh rites of marriage are probably different now from what they were in the time of Solomon: they have evidently undergone a change in ſome particulars *, and therefore may be preſumed to have ſuffered the ſame in others.

But if they had not, the veiling, the marriage ſupper, the conſummation, are according to the preſent ritual all finiſhed on the marriage night: whereas this poem does not commence before the next morning. The Jews obſerve ſeven days of feſtivity excluſive of that in which the ceremony is performed.

* *See Introduction, pag.* xvii.

With regard to the objection, of the bridegroom's feeding his flock, and being abſent from the bride and the gueſts: this may appear formidable.—But who is the bridegroom? — A young and ſprightly monarch, whoſe paſtoral employment could not have been a ſerious labour, but an agreeable relaxation from the toils of government. To one incumbered with the trappings of greatneſs, the ſoft and innocent amuſements of rural life muſt afford the moſt delightful of all entertainments. How could an eaſtern monarch have paſt the nuptial week in a more pleaſing manner? To give the higher reliſh to his enjoyments, he throws off all the encumbrances of pomp, and aſſumes the eaſe and ſimplicity of paſtoral manners: and then his friends, *the children of the Bridechamber*, become ſhepherds his companions: and though they do not always interpoſe in the dialogue, we have no reaſon to conclude that they are ever abſent from him. With regard to the nuptial banquets, &c. as theſe eclogues deſcribe only part of each day's employment, there are intervals enough in which to aſſign time for feaſting: For as the poet has thrown all into dialogue, and never ſpeaks in his own perſon, nothing is deſcribed except what the interlocutors occaſionally mention *. With reſpect to the bridegroom's paſſing many of the nights apart from the bride: we have already ſeen that this is even now the Jewiſh uſage †.

* M. Michaelis *has in effect anſwered this objection himſelf*, Quicquid accidit, nunquam ſuis verbis exponit poeta, &c. pag. 157.

† *See the Introduction*, pag. xix.

That the common rites of marriage are not the formal ſubject of this poem, is allowed, nor will it be wondered at, if we conſider who is the poet.—A lively and ingenious monarch, who, it ſhould ſeem, had already gone through all theſe ceremonies a great many times *: And this being the caſe, what could there be engaging in them? what could there be in them of novelty to excite his genius, or deſerve his deſcription? — Let us only ſuppoſe that he had for once a mind to enliven and diverſify the nuptial feſtivity, by celebrating it in a paſtoral manner, and under the aſſumed character of a ſhepherd; to which he was probably invited by the bride's having ſpent ſome part of her life in rural occupations.

The royal poet, in this caſe, would only touch upon the old eſtabliſhed forms delicately and by inſinuation. It would be ſufficient if theſe were not neglected, but ingeniouſly adapted to the paſtoral character. The proceſſion, the wedding ſupper, the nuptial banquets would be objects too common and too well known to need a formal deſcription. Theſe a writer of genius would leave to the reader's imagination to ſupply. He would chiefly ſelect ſuch incidents as were new and not familiar, the reſt he would either entirely omit, or barely allude to them in a delicate manner and by implication.

Allow but this to have been the caſe, and we have at once a clue to the whole poem. Then we ſhall ſee why it is not a regular nuptial ſong on the one hand, nor a pure paſtoral on the other. And why the youthful mo-

* *See* pag. 32.

narch

narch, having choſen to diverſify the nuptial feſtivities by incidents taken from rural life, and aſſuming paſtoral manners, does not wholly lay aſide his regal character, but ſometimes blends them together: an union which in thoſe early ages was not unfrequent, when princes often fed their flocks, and even his own father was taken from the ſheep-fold.

THUS FAR we argue upon Mr. Michaelis's own principles, who ſeems to controvert the received opinion of this poem's being a ſacred Allegory, and is inclined to look no farther than the literal meaning *. But if it can be proved, or rendered probable, that the whole has a higher and more noble application, and that this elegant deſcription of conjugal love is, after all, only a veil to ſhadow that divine and tender regard which ſubſiſts between the Redeemer and the ſouls of men, then we ſhall find additional reaſons to account for all the beautiful peculiarities of this poem; then we ſhall ſee at once why the regal and paſtoral characters are indiſcriminately applied to that divine Bridegroom, who was at the ſame time both king and ſhepherd.

But this is a ſubject of ſo much importance as to deſerve a particular and diſtinct inquiry, and therefore is reſerved for a future undertaking.

* *He yet allows it to be a production not unworthy the celeſtial Muſe, and thinks it was inſerted in the great Code of ſacred and moral truths, to ſhow that the chaſte fervours of wedded love have the expreſs approbation of the Deity, and to obviate the miſtakes of ſuch moroſe bigots, as hold conjugal love inconſiſtent with the love of God.*

THE END.

ERRATA.

Page 33. *line penult. read*
my own mind.

Page 35. *line* 4. *dele* O! *and read*
* How beautiful are.

Ibid. line 7. *read*
the handy-work.

Page 36. *line* 5. *read*
Thy neck is as it were a.

Page 58. *line* 4. *read*
נעים was originally fem. נעימה.

B L